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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of the Jobs Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families, which seeks to increase employment among people living in public housing, was examined through an in-depth study of the experiences of the interagency and resident Jobs Plus partnerships that were formed in seven cities across the United States in 1997. The study focused on the structures and practices used at each program site to implement the three-pronged Jobs Plus strategy, which is based on the following components: employment-related services; financial work incentives; and community support for work. Overall, the collaboratives had succeeded in implementing a Jobs Plus program, although progress had been slower than hoped. Despite numerous difficulties, the local partners were continuing to work together and the collaboratives were continuing to influence the design

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and operation of Jobs Plus through various formal and informal channels. Several sites improved interagency service coordination through a variety of institutional adaptations. Eighteen specific recommendations for improving collaboration for Jobs Plus were presented. (A discussion of collaboration in other initiatives for low-income families and a list of Job Plus collaborative partners and funding sources in 1999 are appended. Six program profiles are included. The bibliography lists 121 references.) (MN)

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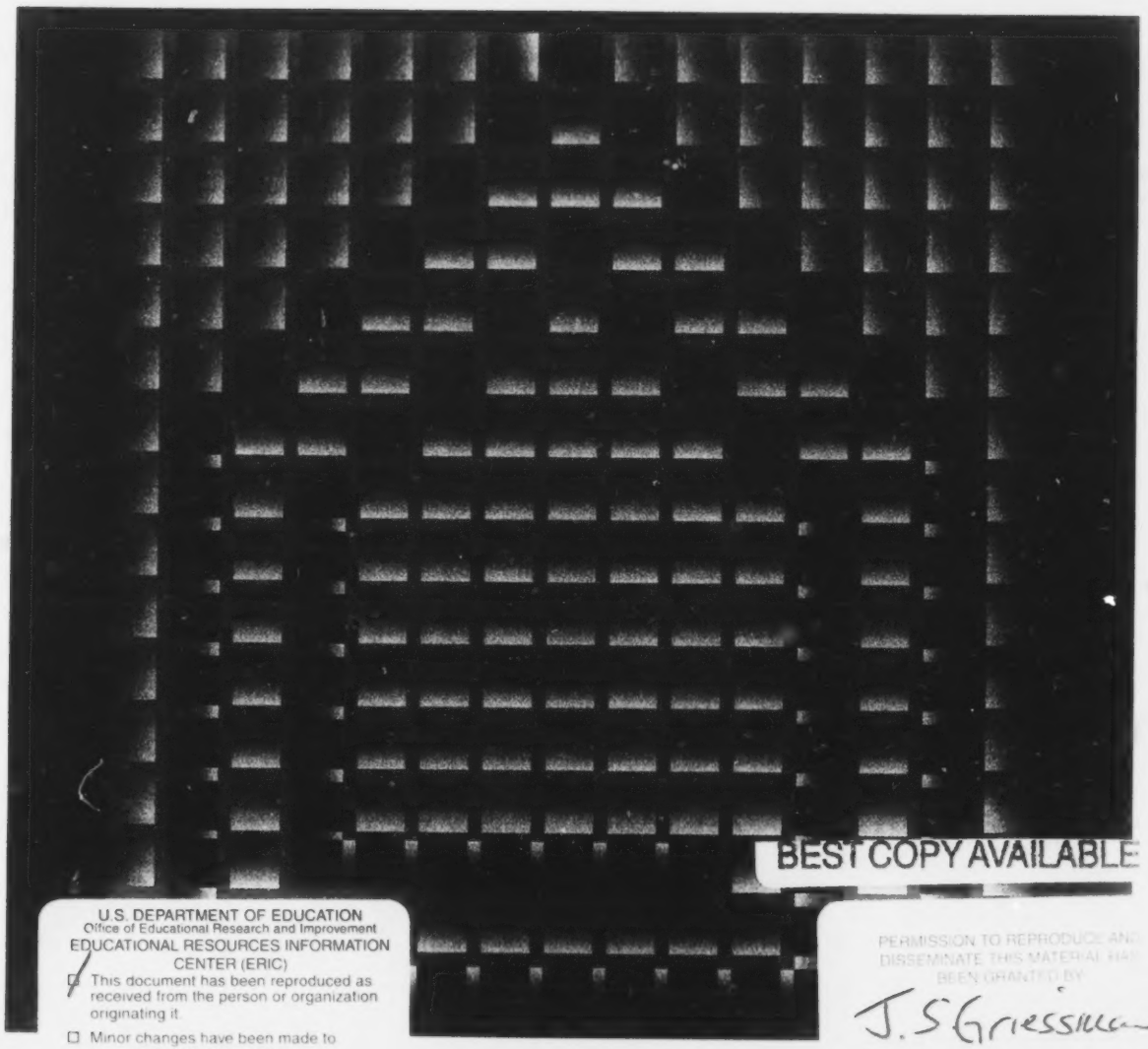
BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Collaboration Among Agencies and Public Housing Residents in the Jobs-Plus Demonstration

Linda Y. Kato
James A. Riccio

May 2001



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BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Collaboration Among Agencies and Public Housing Residents in the Jobs-Plus Demonstration

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May 2001

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OVERVIEW

BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR EMPLOYMENT: Collaboration Among Agencies and Public Housing Residents in the Jobs-Plus Demonstration

To combat joblessness and poverty in low-income communities, multiple organizations must work together with local residents. But productive collaboration on such complex issues is notoriously difficult to create and sustain, partly because partners often have different priorities and agendas. Learning from real-world experiences is critical if this strategy is to work.

This report provides a detailed look at a major current collaborative effort: the *Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families* (or Jobs-Plus). It shows how the seven cities in this national demonstration have attempted to build inclusive and productive partnerships to design, fund, and operate an ambitious, place-based employment initiative for residents of selected public housing developments. The lessons drawn have important practical implications for a wide range of community-building and other initiatives.

Jobs-Plus seeks to boost employment among *all* working-age residents through employment and training services, financial work incentives (especially by limiting rent increases for employed residents), neighbor-to-neighbor outreach, and other efforts to promote and support work. In each of the participating cities, selected in 1997, the partners have included the public housing authority, the welfare department, local workforce development agencies, resident leaders, and other local organizations. The chosen cities were Baltimore, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Dayton, Los Angeles, St. Paul, and Seattle. Cleveland and Seattle are no longer in the demonstration, but Seattle is still operating its Jobs-Plus program.

Among their key challenges and accomplishments to date are:

- **Collaborative governance and management.** The collaboratives' experiences point to the value of: vesting governing authority in a core group of active partners while keeping the larger group in the dialogue in other ways; establishing explicit lines of authority between the governing partners and program staff; devising better mechanisms for holding staff — and partners — accountable; and distinguishing funding and management of the collaborative from that of the program.

- **Collaboration in service delivery.** Some sites have made considerable progress in building an integrated network of services with close coordination among frontline staff. Such coordination is critical in order to serve and monitor residents effectively across a geographically dispersed network of providers. Toward this end, agencies have modified staff training procedures and expanded their interagency data-sharing efforts. Moreover, some sites have changed broader agency policies as a result of their participation in the collaboratives. Most welfare agencies, for instance, have allowed residents to meet their welfare-to-work obligations by participating in Jobs-Plus.

- **Housing authority adaptations.** Jobs-Plus challenged housing authorities' nearly exclusive focus on housing management and traditional isolation from the activities of welfare and workforce development agencies. Examples of important housing authority adaptations include efforts to: improve internal coordination (e.g., to implement the rent incentives or link employment assistance to efforts to head off evictions); "fast track" internal decisionmaking for Jobs-Plus; transfer Jobs-Plus funds to independent agencies to address procurement constraints; and permit other partners influence over key hiring decisions, even for staff on the housing authority's payroll.

- **Residents' involvement.** Residents have had a significant influence in shaping the Jobs-Plus programs, despite sometimes tense relationships between residents and housing authorities. Some sites have succeeded in reaching beyond traditional leaders in building the technical capacity of residents to assume specific leadership and staff roles in the program.

The Jobs-Plus demonstration was conceived by its two principal funders — the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and The Rockefeller Foundation — along with MDRC, which is managing and evaluating the demonstration. It is supported as well by the other funders listed at the front of this report.

May 2001

Contents

Preface	vii
Acknowledgments	viii
Executive Summary	ES-1
Chapter 1. The Logic and Vision of Collaboration in Jobs-Plus	1
Introduction	1
Rationale and Policy Context for Collaboration in Jobs-Plus	2
Vision of and Potential Obstacles to Collaboration for Jobs-Plus	6
Building on Preexisting Relationships	10
Analytical Approach for Assessing Collaboration in Jobs-Plus	11
Conclusion	13
Chapter 2. The Places, Programs, and Partners	15
Introduction	15
The Jobs-Plus Sites	15
The Jobs-Plus Programs: What Has Been Accomplished So Far?	18
The Partners and the Resources They Brought to the Table	23
Conclusion	33
Chapter 3. Governance, Networking, and Accountability	35
Introduction	35
Formal Governance as a Starting Point for Partner Involvement	35
Beyond Governance: Other Ways to Influence Jobs-Plus	46
Ensuring Adequate Accountability	49
Conclusion	51
Chapter 4. Collaboration in Service Delivery	53
Introduction	53
Coordinating with the Welfare Agency to Serve TANF Recipients	54
Coordinating Multi-Agency Staff to Provide On-Site Services	57
Coordinating Off-Site Services	60
Coordinating Services with One-Stops in the New Workforce Development System	63
Conclusion	65
Chapter 5. Jobs-Plus and the Housing Authority	67
Introduction	67
Conflicting Missions: Social Welfare Versus Property Management	68
Bureaucratic Impediments	71
Housing Authority Adaptations for Jobs-Plus	73
Conclusion	78

Chapter 6. Involving Residents as Collaborative Partners 79
Introduction 79
How Did Residents Contribute to Program Development? 79
What Does It Take to Involve Residents in Ways That Are Inclusive and Productive? 83
Contrasting Examples of Resident Involvement 94
Conclusion 97

Chapter 7. Lessons and Recommendations 99
Introduction 99
Approaching Formal Governance 100
Building an Operations-Level Collaborative 101
Special Considerations in Linking Jobs-Plus to the Welfare Department and WIA One-Stop Career Centers 104
Engaging Residents 106
Selecting and Supporting Program Leaders 108
Holding the Partners and the Program Staff Accountable for High Performance 110
Collaborative Funding 112
Contending with the Normal Bureaucratic Constraints of the Housing Authority 113
Conclusion 114

Appendix A. Collaboration in Other Initiatives for Low-Income Families 115

Appendix B. Collaborative Partners and Funding Sources in 1999 123

Tables and Figures
Figure 1.1: The Jobs-Plus Approach 3
Table 2.1: Selected Characteristics of Households and Household Heads Living in Jobs-Plus Developments in 1997 16
Table 2.2: Income Sources of Households in Jobs-Plus Developments in 1996 17

Program Profiles
Jobs-Plus in Baltimore: Gilmore Homes 20
Jobs-Plus in Chattanooga: Harriet Tubman Homes 22
Jobs-Plus in Dayton: DeSoto Bass Courts 24
Jobs-Plus in Los Angeles: Imperial Courts and William Mead Homes 25
Jobs-Plus in St. Paul: Mt. Airy Homes 28
Jobs-Plus in Seattle: Rainier Vista 30

Bibliography 129

Recent Publications on MDRC Projects 137

Preface

This report — the latest on the Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families — focuses on the local partnerships that are a cornerstone of this ambitious effort to greatly increase employment among people living in public housing. These partnerships were created to involve a host of public and private agencies in the design, operations, and oversight of the Jobs-Plus program, and — importantly — to give residents a real voice in programs that directly affect their lives. Collaboration is never easy, but the Jobs-Plus sites struggled hard with myriad challenges and experimented with a variety of approaches. Some strategies worked better than others, and the trade-offs among them became more apparent over time.

Today, "collaboration" is a concept permeating efforts to deal with a multitude of intransigent, complex social problems that are beyond the capacity of any individual agency to address effectively. It is therefore critical to learn as much as possible about how best to structure, operate, and sustain these partnerships. The problems are too urgent and the resources too limited to allow for reinventing the wheel with each new initiative. We hope that the lessons from this pioneering work help guide future efforts to build inclusive and productive partnerships.

We are grateful to the sponsors who helped conceive and develop this initiative, and to all those striving to make it real and successful on the ground — especially the participating residents, who have the greatest stake of all in the transformation of their communities into places where employment is the norm.

Judith M. Gueron
President

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The late Mitchell Sviridoff contributed wise insights and advice rooted in a lifetime of pioneering thought and work on community-based social interventions. Eugene Bardach, Xavier de Souza Briggs, Prue Brown, Ronald Chaskin, Wendy Fleischer, Archon Fung, Carol Glazer, and Anne Kubisch reviewed and critiqued earlier drafts of this report, offering invaluable comments and suggestions based on their extensive research and policy work.

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The entire effort has required the commitment of the Jobs-Plus funders. They are gratefully acknowledged by name at the front of the report.

The Authors

Executive Summary

Collaboration, in which agencies and sometimes local residents work together in pursuit of common goals, is an increasingly popular public management strategy in a wide variety of fields including public health, environmental regulation, social services, and community revitalization. Yet many of the potential benefits of collaboration remain unrealized — or undemonstrated — and many questions remain about how partnerships can best be structured and about the procedures and policies that can best facilitate their efforts.

This study takes an in-depth look at the experiences of interagency and resident partnerships that were formed in seven cities in 1997 to design and implement an ambitious place-based employment intervention: *the Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families* ("Jobs-Plus" for short). At the time, these cities (or "sites") included Baltimore, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Dayton, Los Angeles, Seattle, and St. Paul.[1] Each operated a Jobs-Plus program in one (or two, in the case of Los Angeles) of their public housing developments. The study explores the ways in which the sites approached the challenges of collaboration. Although these partnerships were created to address the problem of unemployment among public housing residents, lessons from the sites' experiences may inform collaborative efforts aimed at other pressing public policy issues in other fields.

The present study is part of a multi-year evaluation of Jobs-Plus, a project developed by The Rockefeller Foundation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC).[2] Other public agencies and private foundations (acknowledged at the front of this report) are providing the initiative with additional financial support.

What Is Jobs-Plus?

Jobs-Plus seeks to make dramatic improvements in a variety of employment outcomes for residents of public housing developments suffering from low rates of steady employment and high rates of welfare use. The initiative uses a three-pronged strategy that combines (1) *employment-related services* to help residents prepare for and find jobs; (2) *financial work incentives* to "make work pay" by reducing the extent to which a family's rent rises with increased earnings; and (3) a *community support for work* component to strengthen and develop social ties that support residents' work efforts. By offering these services, incentives, and social supports to *all* working-age residents (a "saturation" approach), it is hoped that a substantial majority of public housing residents will become steadily employed.

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[1]Two of these cities — Cleveland and Seattle — have since left the demonstration for reasons discussed in the body of the report. Although they are no longer part of the national evaluation, their experiences during the period of their participation remain relevant and are included in this analysis.

[2]The broader evaluation is assessing the feasibility, implementation, and effectiveness of the initiative and will continue through at least 2003.

Why Collaboration?

Recognizing that no single agency could craft, fund, and operate such a comprehensive initiative, the national designers of Jobs-Plus called for the creation of new local partnerships (or "collaboratives") in the seven cities. Each site's housing authority, resident representatives, local welfare department, and workforce development agency (that is, the agency operating since 1998 under the Workforce Investment Act, or WIA) were mandatory partners on these collaboratives. The housing authorities had access to HUD resources and controlled many policies affecting housing developments and their tenants, but they needed the experience and resources of the welfare department and the workforce development agency in providing employment and social services. At the same time, these agencies had little knowledge of the circumstances of public housing residents, who formed a sizable percentage of their caseloads. Furthermore, resident representatives on the collaboratives could bring an in-depth awareness of their communities and service needs and could foster community trust and "buy-in" for the program. Finally, other local organizations were expected to join as a source of services, expertise, and other resources that would help advance Jobs-Plus's employment mission.

Key Findings

Programmatic Accomplishments

- **The collaboratives succeeded in implementing a Jobs-Plus program in each site, although progress has been slower than had been hoped.**

The collaboratives have made significant progress in getting fully functioning Jobs-Plus programs in place. By the beginning of 2001, residents had access to a range of on-site and off-site employment related-services, and the program's financial incentives were available after a long delay (in part due to delays in obtaining HUD funding for this component). However, significant progress has only recently been made in instituting the community support for work component. And such implementation difficulties as staff turnover and an unstable funding base at times left the programs in some sites in a fragile state. But all appear to be growing stronger and more stable as they mature into the multi-component intervention originally envisioned. According to data supplied by the programs themselves, approximately 2,300 residents have been enrolled in Jobs-Plus since its inception.

Enduring Partnerships

- **Driven by shared interests and the promise that Jobs-Plus holds, the local partners continue to work together despite numerous difficulties.**

Collaboration for Jobs-Plus has been a long and bumpy journey, with many challenges and setbacks. Early on, some partners left the collaboratives, seeing no concrete role for their organizations. Others continued on but expressed frustration at the slow pace of progress. Moreover, as a relatively small demonstration project, Jobs-Plus has had difficulty

competing in some cities for the attention of senior agency officials who also have to contend with other local policy and administrative priorities. Nonetheless, the collaboratives have persevered and have made important (if uneven) progress both in jointly funding and shaping the Jobs-Plus program and in coordinating services across agencies. The partners' enduring commitment to this initiative can be traced largely to their converging interests in helping to increase employment among low-income people — many of whom live in public housing — particularly in the wake of welfare reform that ended the entitlement to cash assistance.

Collective Decisionmaking

- **The collaboratives continue to influence the design and operation of Jobs-Plus through a variety of formal and informal channels.**

The collaboratives initially structured themselves as formal governance bodies for making authoritative decisions over Jobs-Plus. In practice, the degree to which this occurred depended on the local housing authority's willingness to share decisionmaking, the other partners' desire to play a governing role, and the project director's commitment to shared decisionmaking. Particularly during the program's design phase, formal governance was important in giving "low-power" stakeholders like the residents and community-based organizations an authoritative voice alongside large public agencies in developing key aspects of the program, such as the rent incentives component. As the emphasis shifted from design to implementation and ongoing development issues, strategic and operational decisions for Jobs-Plus increasingly shifted from the collaborative to the project director and staff in each site. The extent to which the partners now play a formal governance role varies across the sites. But even where this role has been curtailed, the partners in all sites have continued to exert influence over Jobs-Plus in other ways, such as by providing ideas, expertise, and strategic advice through collaborative meetings that have come to be used as opportunities for interagency networking and information-sharing; through staff contributed by partner agencies to Jobs-Plus; and through informal interactions with the project director.

Collaboration in the Delivery of Services

- **A number of sites improved interagency service coordination for Jobs-Plus through a variety of institutional adaptations.**

The collaboratives in a number of sites took actions that improved the ways in which many different agencies worked together to deliver their services to residents of public housing. Although interagency service coordination for Jobs-Plus falls short of constituting a seamless, well-integrated network of services, the collaboratives have helped to make changes in standard intake procedures and have restructured the roles of frontline workers in key agencies to generate a more sensible division of labor among staff in jointly serving Jobs-Plus participants. The goal is to avoid placing duplicative — and even contradictory — demands on residents. Joint staff training, better data-sharing, and building direct relation-

ships among frontline staff across agencies have also helped to coordinate services, construct sensible service plans, and monitor residents' progress across services provided by a network of agencies.

Modifying TANF Rules for Jobs-Plus

- **Welfare agencies have modified the rules governing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to allow participation in Jobs-Plus to satisfy welfare-to-work participation requirements.**

As an employment program, Jobs-Plus must operate within the broader policy context set by the local welfare and workforce development systems, requiring special efforts to coordinate Jobs-Plus with those systems. Among the most important of these modifications has been the project's success in getting welfare agencies to count participation in Jobs-Plus as satisfying TANF welfare-to-work participation requirements. This permits public housing residents who are TANF recipients to take part in Jobs-Plus activities without risking financial sanctions for not participating in TANF activities.

Connecting Jobs-Plus to WIA One-Stop Centers

- **Coordinating the provision of Jobs-Plus services with that of a local one-stop career center may not negate the need to offer some on-site services at the housing development.**

The one-stop career centers established by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) are becoming a central feature of local workforce development systems nationwide and aim to provide centralized access to a variety of work-related programs and services. In Dayton, the collaborative looked to Jobs-Plus to refer residents to the city's highly developed one-stop center and to help those residents make better use of the center's programs. Special liaison workers at the center were assigned to help residents navigate the maze of offerings. However, the response from residents was disappointing. Residents preferred the convenience of on-site services at the housing development. As a result, Jobs-Plus expanded services there as a kind of satellite one-stop, making use of the main one-stop center to complement the program's services.

Engaging Residents as Collaborative Partners

- **Residents were much more than "token partners," but ensuring that they were involved in productive ways was a complex effort.**

Resident leaders had an important role as partners on the collaborative in identifying the service needs of their community and proposing useful service approaches that were not obvious to professional staff operating under agency views of "what can be done." Such leaders' active support was critical in fostering residents' trust and participation in the program. Involving residents effectively, however, challenged the collaboratives to overcome considerable social and political obstacles. The barriers that residents faced to their broad,

productive engagement varied across sites and included such factors as the exclusive professional culture of the agency representatives on the collaborative, entrenched resident leadership, adversarial relations with the housing authority, and the residents' need for greater technical expertise in order to advise an employment program. Thus, while it is feasible and critical to engage residents as collaborative partners, making that happen requires the support of the institutional partners, certain skills and values on the part of the project director, and resident capacity-building efforts that develop specific leadership and management skills for performing well-defined roles in the program.

Holding the Program and the Partners Accountable

- **The collaboratives generally lacked adequate structures for ensuring that the programs were accountable for their progress and performance and that collaborative partners were accountable for their commitments.**

The Jobs-Plus collaboratives will ultimately be judged by their success in getting programs on-line that help residents secure and retain jobs. But most of the collaboratives lacked adequate accountability mechanisms for ensuring that Jobs-Plus staff met the program's employment goals. They also lacked adequate accountability mechanisms for ensuring that partner agencies fulfilled their resource and service commitments to Jobs-Plus. Instead, the collaboratives relied heavily on the personal dedication of the agency representatives to ensure their agencies' cooperation. These limitations may have weakened the overall performance of the Jobs-Plus programs — and also the opportunity for residents to use the collaboratives to hold agencies accountable for services provided to their communities.

The collaboratives needed to establish clearer lines and instruments of authority between their governing body and the site's project director (the most critical staff position) and between the project director and the line staff contributed to Jobs-Plus by the partner agencies. Furthermore, because a site's housing authority controls many Jobs-Plus resources and staff, its willingness to set and enforce high standards of performance is especially critical for the program's successful administration and operations.

Institutional Adaptations for Jobs-Plus Within the Housing Authority

- **Operating Jobs-Plus well requires that the housing authority transcend its traditional mission of housing management.**

Given the nature of Jobs-Plus as a place-based employment intervention in public housing, each collaborative relies on the local housing authority to provide facilities, equipment, and program staff and to manage the rent incentives component and the funds allocated to Jobs-Plus. This has required the housing authority to take on a broader social service role that challenges its traditional priorities of property maintenance and security, rent collection, and lease enforcement. This, in turn, has required a change in organizational culture within the housing authority and the willingness of senior-level officials to support institutional adaptations that facilitate program implementation and responsiveness to residents' needs. Examples of such adaptations include senior-level interventions to "fast-track" the

agency's procurement and staffing decisions for Jobs-Plus, to promote cooperation across relevant agency divisions, and, in some cases, to transfer Jobs-Plus funds and management from the housing authority to a nonprofit outside agency that has less complex procurement and personnel regulations.

Conclusion

To the extent that various organizations strive to improve the economic self-sufficiency of a community — through Jobs-Plus or other types of employment initiatives — in a comprehensive, sustainable manner with broad community support, they will undoubtedly need to turn to other public and private agencies and resident leaders for help. Indeed, it is unlikely that Jobs-Plus could have been operated well *without* some form of collaboration among the housing authority, local agencies, and residents. But any attempts to form such partnerships are likely to confront a common set of challenges. The experiences of the Jobs-Plus sites illustrate different approaches to collaboration and various efforts to address its challenges effectively. Building on the lessons of these experiences, this report identifies a number of practical steps that local partners might take to shorten the learning curve in working together to design and operate a Jobs-Plus program — or to undertake other kinds of employment or social interventions that can benefit from cooperation among multiple agencies and their shared clients. The following selected recommendations for improving collaborative efforts are described fully in Chapter 7.

Selected Recommendations for Improving Collaboration for Jobs-Plus

Collective Decisionmaking

√ Responsibility for formal governance should be restricted to a small governing board or executive committee of core partners and should include senior officials of participating agencies.

√ Most partners can contribute to decisionmaking for Jobs-Plus in a variety of ways that do not involve a formal governance role, such as by participating on formal advisory bodies, serving as program staff, and communicating informally with each other and with the project director. These forms of engagement should be promoted.

Coordinating Service Delivery

√ The responsibilities of some frontline workers (for example, those with responsibilities for case management and employment counseling) may need to be restructured so that residents who are affiliated with multiple systems do not receive duplicative or even contradictory guidance.

√ Joint training should be conducted for Jobs-Plus staff and the frontline workers of partner agencies to allow them to coordinate their efforts better and take full advantage of the complementary kinds of support that they can offer to residents.

- √ TANF rules should be modified to permit welfare recipients who live in public housing to fulfill their welfare-to-work participation requirements by participating in Jobs-Plus.
- √ Jobs-Plus can serve as a public housing-based recruitment source for services provided largely at a WIA one-stop career center or as a satellite to it. Jobs-Plus should also take advantage of one-stops as a way to assist people who are not on a lease but who have relationships with legal residents of the public housing development.

The Role of the Housing Authority

- √ Senior housing authority officials should consider ways to "fast-track" procurement requests for Jobs-Plus or ways of using other agencies to circumvent the housing authority's own bureaucratic constraints (if such constraints are likely to undermine program operations).
- √ On-site housing authority managers should be involved in the design and oversight of the program to foster broader housing authority support and better coordination.

Involving Residents as Partners

- √ The project director and other collaborative leaders must champion and promote the involvement and input of residents as influential partners.
- √ Efforts should be made to reach beyond traditional, narrow resident leadership and to cultivate input from a broader cross-section of the population over time.
- √ Technical assistance should be provided to build residents' capacity for governance, management, and line staff roles, and it should be tailored to the specific functions those roles entail.

Leadership and Accountability

- √ The project director should be a person who values collaboration, is a skilled diplomat, and possesses the technical knowledge and managerial acumen suited to the particular nature and goals of Jobs-Plus.
- √ The project director's dual roles of leading the collaborative and managing the program may be untenable without additional partner or staff support.
- √ In the absence of legislative or contractual requirements, governing partners must hold themselves and other agencies accountable by capitalizing on informal relationships as well as formal interagency agreements that specify the contributions and levels of performance expected of each agency.
- √ The diffusion of responsibility inherent in collaborative structures makes it imperative that clear lines of authority and accountability be established between the project director and the governing board.
- √ The project director should also be granted significant authority over the colocated staff from various agencies in order to foster better interagency coordination of service delivery and accountability for line staff performance.

COLLABORATIVE FUNDING

√ TANF funds should be considered as a possible source of much-needed flexible case resources for Jobs-Plus.

√ To enhance the ability of Jobs-Plus to serve all working-age residents, interagency agreements should be negotiated to allow colocated TANF, WIA, and other agency staff to serve public housing residents who are not clients of their systems (in addition to those who are).

Chapter 1

The Logic and Vision of Collaboration in Jobs-Plus

Introduction

In the mid-1990s, local partnerships, or "collaboratives," were convened in seven U.S. cities to design and implement a new, place-based employment program as part of the Jobs-Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families ("Jobs-Plus" for short). This national research demonstration project brought together public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and public housing residents as partners in an ambitious effort to increase the rate of steady work substantially among residents of "low-work, high-welfare" public housing developments. This report is about the structure and performance of these collaboratives over their first four years of operation, beginning in 1997.

The demonstration's national designers turned to local collaboratives to design and implement this program because they believed that what Jobs-Plus sought to accomplish would exceed the capacities of any one agency or organization to achieve single-handedly. The designers looked instead to the expertise, experience, and resources of a variety of local agencies and organizations as well as to the guidance of public housing residents themselves. This study describes the variety of approaches to collaboration that the local partners tried, and it explores how well these strategies worked. Its findings will be important to consider in any decision to replicate the Jobs-Plus program in other public housing developments.

"Collaboration" can be broadly defined as any joint activity between two or more organizations that is intended to increase the value of their efforts by working together rather than separately.[1] It often involves efforts by organizations to reach across jurisdictions, cut through bureaucratic regulations, and pool resources and ideas in tackling complex problems. The increased value that collaboration can produce can take the form, for example, of more cost-effective or more comprehensive or more fairly distributed services. Although collaboration is currently a popular theme of public management strategy in fields as diverse as public health, environmental regulation, social services, and urban development,[2] many of its potential benefits remain unrealized or undemonstrated. Many questions also remain about how collaboratives can best be structured and what ways of operating them can best facilitate achieving their goals. This study addresses such questions, which apply across a wide range of policy areas. Thus, the report may hold broad relevance for public

[1]This is a paraphrase of the definition of interagency collaboration found in Bardach (1998, p. 8). The term "organization" expands his definition to include representative bodies of community stakeholders, such as the public housing residents.

[2]See, for example, Gray, 1985; Aspen Institute, 1997; Lasker, 1997; Bardach, 1998; Fung, 1998, 2000.

administrative reform and other community renewal initiatives that call for joint efforts of a variety of agencies and residents directed toward common goals.

The study is part of a multi-year evaluation of Jobs-Plus, a national research demonstration project developed by The Rockefeller Foundation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), with support from other public agencies and private foundations.[3] The broader evaluation is assessing the feasibility, implementation, and effectiveness of the initiative and will continue through at least 2003.

Seven cities (or "sites") — Baltimore, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Dayton, Los Angeles, Seattle, and St. Paul — were selected in 1997 to launch a Jobs-Plus program in one (or two, in the case of Los Angeles) of their public housing developments. Two of these cities — Cleveland and Seattle — have since left the demonstration, for reasons discussed later in this report. Although they are no longer part of the national evaluation, their experiences during the period of their participation remain relevant to the topics covered by this report and are included in the analysis presented here.

Rationale and Policy Context for Collaboration in Jobs-Plus

Jobs-Plus is distinguished from most employment initiatives by its focus on improving employment outcomes for people living in a particular place (a public housing development) rather than for people who meet the categorical targeting or eligibility criteria of a particular service delivery system or agency. Jobs-Plus also differs from many community change initiatives. It focuses almost exclusively, and more intensively, on employment as the pathway to change rather than trying simultaneously to improve a variety of community factors (such as health care, schools, safety, and economic development).

The program uses an innovative, three-pronged strategy of services, financial work incentives, and social supports to bolster residents' efforts to prepare for, locate, and retain jobs. The *employment-related services* component includes instruction in job search skills, job readiness training, education programs, vocational training, and assistance with child care and transportation. The *financial work incentives* component involves changes in public housing rent rules that help "make work pay" by reducing the extent to which gains in household income from higher earnings are offset by increases in rent. The *community support for work* component aims to strengthen and develop social ties that can be used to support residents' work efforts — for example, by fostering neighbor-to-neighbor information-sharing about jobs and ways to get help preparing for jobs. Local Jobs-Plus programs are also charged with offering these components at "saturation levels" to try to reach and help *all* working-age residents living in the Jobs-Plus development. The premise of this initiative is that success in substantially increasing the employment levels of a public housing devel-

[3] Other funders include the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Labor; the Joyce, James Irvine, Surdna, Northwest Area, Annie E. Casey, Stuart, and Washington Mutual Foundations; and BP.

opment will also lead to improvements in the quality of life of the residents and help make the development a better place in which to live. (See Figure 1.1 for a graphic representation of the Jobs-Plus approach.)

Figure 1.1
The Jobs-Plus Approach

Saturation — Reaching all working-age residents through:

Employment-related services	+	Financial work incentives	+	Community support for work	→	Big improvements in employment, earnings, and quality of life

Local collaboration between public and nonprofit service providers and the residents seemed to the national designers to offer a way to address a number of the practical and political challenges in undertaking and sustaining such a complex and ambitious community intervention. These challenges include:

- *Diverse service needs.* As a saturation-level, place-based employment program, Jobs-Plus aimed to work with individuals having a diverse set of employment barriers and service needs. To address these needs comprehensively, it was imperative that the program seek to involve a range of agencies offering different kinds of expertise and resources.

- *Distinctive local conditions.* Jobs-Plus needed the knowledge and expertise of those who understood the resident community, the local labor market, and neighborhood conditions in order to provide services that residents would be likely to use and that would enable them to secure and retain employment.

- *Legitimacy.* Jobs-Plus needed broad resident support in order to appeal to and assist a high proportion of its target population. Engaging residents as partners in program design and delivery offered a way to solicit residents' input and build their support for the program.

- *Sustainability.* Jobs-Plus needed local funding contributions beyond what the national designers could raise to operate the demonstration in seven cities. Moreover, sustaining and expanding Jobs-Plus (if successful) after the end of the demonstration would require funding from more than just the local housing authorities. The welfare and public workforce development systems — the two mainstream public systems through which most government dollars for welfare-to-work and job training services flow in the United States — would need to share this financial burden.

The national designers therefore assigned the responsibility for Jobs-Plus to newly formed local collaboratives. While they expected these partnerships to include a broad group of public and private actors, they *required* them to involve the public housing authority, the welfare department, the workforce development system[4] (represented by the local Job Training Partnership Act, or JTPA, agency), and resident representatives. Each of these partners had something special and important to offer in designing and implementing an effective Jobs-Plus program, but each was also limited in what it could do alone. The public housing authorities would bring access to HUD resources, control over local public housing policies and the deployment of local staff and management systems, and experience in working with residents. However, most housing authorities had little experience in operating large-scale employment programs. In contrast, the two other public systems — the welfare and JTPA workforce development systems — could contribute this type of programmatic expertise along with substantial financial resources; but they had little direct understanding of the special situations facing members of their caseloads living in public housing. Finally, the resident representatives, although not controlling substantial institutional resources or offering technical expertise, could help Jobs-Plus develop program approaches that would appeal to the community and garner broad support.

The national designers also called on the collaboratives to encourage the participation of other local actors, such as nonprofit employment and training providers, education agencies, community organizations, local and regional foundations, employers and business organizations, and local elected officials. Jobs-Plus could draw on their local knowledge, expertise in serving hard-to-employ populations, and influence over public and private policies and resource decisions.

The concept of Jobs-Plus held immediate appeal for local housing authorities. Federal subsidies that covered operating costs (which could not be met with rent revenues alone) were tight, and fears that the subsidies would be cut substantially were widespread when the demonstration began. Rent revenues would have to grow, it was believed, if housing authorities were to avoid a financial crisis. At the same time, however, federal welfare reform under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 imposed time limits and other restrictions on access to welfare benefits; this sparked concern that housing authorities' rent revenues would actually *shrink* if many residents were left with less income with which to pay rent. In this environment, many public housing authorities gave greater priority to the goal of helping residents work.

While the potential benefits to the housing authorities were clear, why would other public agencies want to get involved in Jobs-Plus? What was in it for them? Their major impetus was the growing public policy pressure to help "hard-to-employ" low-income people — many of whom live in public housing — to attain employment and self-sufficiency. The advent of time-limited welfare under PRWORA meant that welfare agencies would have to find new ways to improve employment outcomes for recipients most at

[4]"Workforce development system" refers to the network of federally funded job training and other employment-related services for disadvantaged youths and adults and dislocated workers.

risk of using up their benefits and being left with few good options to support themselves and their families. These harder-to-employ cases were believed to include a sizable number of public housing residents. In 1996, for example, 24 percent of the recipients of federal cash welfare under Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or its successor, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), were residents of public housing or used other federal government rent subsidies in privately owned housing.[5]

Similarly, the workforce development system — operating under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 and its successor, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) — was entrusted with administration of the federal Welfare-to-Work Grants Program to improve job opportunities for the hardest-to-employ TANF recipients. In addition, WIA gave priority for the workforce development system's more intensive assessment, case management, and job training to low-income people who are deemed to face the greatest employment barriers.

Recognizing the potential benefits of collaboration, WIA also mandated better service coordination between certain federally funded employment and training agencies, many of which must now operate through new, one-stop employment centers. In a similar vein, HUD and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a "model agreement" for use by housing authorities and state and local welfare agencies in coordinating their efforts to help families who receive housing assistance to move from welfare to work.[6]

Looking beyond the immediate goals of the project, the national designers of Jobs-Plus hoped that the demonstration would spur some experimentation and innovation in local service policies and administrative practices that would lead to broader cooperation in service delivery across the housing, welfare, and workforce development systems. But subsequent chapters will show that far-reaching institutional change was an unlikely prospect, given the following factors: the relatively small size of the demonstration in each city; the concentrated timeline for producing employment outcomes; and the steep local competition that Jobs-Plus faced from other, often much larger or more politically important, initiatives.

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[5]Sard and Daskal, 1998. This rate varies widely from state to state. For example, in 1996, 40 percent of AFDC/TANF families in Massachusetts received housing assistance, compared with 12 percent in California.

[6]One summary of this agreement states: "The agreement aims to help housing authorities comply with a 1998 law requiring them to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the following three goals: target services and assistance to families that receive welfare assistance and live in public housing; improve the delivery of assistance to low-income families receiving welfare and living in HUD-assisted housing to help families become self-sufficient; and reduce and discourage fraud and non-compliance with welfare self-sufficiency program requirements. . . . Housing agencies may use the sample memorandum of agreement to formalize partnerships with welfare agencies" (*Welfare Reporter*, September 2000, p. 11).

Vision of and Potential Obstacles to Collaboration for Jobs-Plus

The national designers did not propose any specifications for the structure and organization of the local collaboratives. Instead, they established three guiding principles for all of the partnerships to follow:[7]

- *Shared local investment.* The collaborative partners must ensure that Jobs-Plus is funded jointly through a combination of local resources — primarily, contributions from the mainstream housing, welfare, and workforce development systems.

- *Coordinated policy and service delivery.* The collaborative partners must ensure that Jobs-Plus uses existing services operated by a variety of local organizations. The partners must therefore work together to coordinate and adapt these services — and the policies covering access to and participation in them — to suit the particular needs and circumstances of public housing residents.

- *Inclusive decisionmaking.* The collaborative partners must ensure that they each have a voice in the decisionmaking process through which Jobs-Plus is designed and operated. (This was considered essential for securing both resident support for the program and the willingness of partner agencies to share the funding burden and work together in delivering services.)

These principles build on broader trends in public administration reform and community development that emphasize creating a more efficient and responsive service delivery system through better coordination of services and greater public agency accountability to citizens.[8] In part, these principles reflect the pragmatic concerns of "reinventing government" proponents and other public administration reformers who promote interagency collaboration as a potentially effective strategy for addressing complex social needs that require efforts beyond any single agency's scope of decisionmaking authority and resources.[9] For instance, to secure and retain employment, public housing residents often need income supports, child care, transportation, and substance abuse treatment, in addition to employment services. Addressing these needs would typically require each resident to patch together services from a bewildering array of separate agencies, each with different eligibility requirements, service locations, case managers, and so on. Job-Plus would therefore need to be an interagency initiative. In general, interagency collaboration is seen as a way to coordinate "fragmented" systems while relieving taxpayers of costly service duplication.[10] The inclusion of community-based nonprofit service providers as partners and

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[7]These principles were not written down as such, but they are evident in many different kinds of communications from the national partners to the local partners.

[8]See Sviridoff and Ryan (1996) for a general discussion of interagency coordination and local community empowerment as approaches for addressing local service needs more responsively and effectively.

[9]Handler, 1990; Barzelay, 1992; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992.

[10]Kettl and DiIulio, 1995; Ingraham, Thompson, and Sanders, 1997; Bardach, 1998.

subcontractors is seen as a way to bring additional flexibility and local expertise into the delivery of public services.[11]

Involving residents as collaborative partners in Jobs-Plus was an idea consistent with and inspired by the democratic vision held by numerous public administration reformers and sponsors of community revitalization initiatives for low-income neighborhoods.[12] Many such reformers insist that, in a democratic society, government agencies must be more accountable to local communities for the public services they provide or fund. To this end, residents need to be empowered through processes and institutions that engage them as partners of government agencies in developing and monitoring public services with the reasonable expectation that their concerns and ideas will directly impact agency policies and staff decisions.[13] Many believe that such partnerships not only can increase the likelihood that residents will get services that address their needs but also can enhance the civic participatory and leadership skills of residents, particularly those from disadvantaged communities. Some proponents of community development initiatives go so far as to insist that these partnerships need to permit residents to set the agenda for their proceedings and to prepare the residents eventually to manage or even own and operate services in their communities — as a way of empowering what have hitherto been marginalized "client communities" dependent on the services of outside professional providers.[14] Although Jobs-Plus was not explicitly designed with such an ambitious intent in mind, it was expected to promote resident empowerment by placing residents at the decisionmaking table as partners with local powerbrokers, often for the first time, to plan and oversee the operation of an important community program.

But a commitment to democratic "inclusiveness" would not be easily reconciled with the Jobs-Plus collaboratives' need to be productive — that is, to get a well-functioning program in place. Collaborative undertakings invariably experience tensions and trade-offs between "process" and "product"— for example, between the time and capacity-building investments needed to draw partners inclusively into a collective decisionmaking "process," on the one hand, and the collaborative's need to demonstrate progress in generating specific policy or programmatic "products," on the other. Indeed, the Jobs-Plus collaboratives would need to implement a program in a timely manner that could quickly produce employment outcomes to meet the demonstration's timelines and maintain the interest and

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[11]Smith and Lipsky, 1993; Salamon, 1995.

[12]Such initiatives include the federal HOPE VI program, which funds the replacement or reconstruction of decaying public housing developments, and the federal Empowerment Zone/ Enterprise Communities program, which funds economic revitalization efforts in distressed communities as well as the largely foundation-sponsored "comprehensive community initiatives," or CCIs, for rebuilding inner-city areas.

[13]Bringing community stakeholders to the planning table with public agencies has been a feature of past federally sponsored initiatives for economic development, such as the Community Action Program (CAP) and Model Cities, or the HUD-sponsored employment program, Family Self-Sufficiency. This approach currently appears to be enjoying a new prominence. See Appendix A for a brief history of such efforts.

[14]Medoff and Sklar, 1994; McKnight, 1995; Freire, 1997.

commitment of the partner agencies. Several studies argue, however, that attempts to circumvent the trust-building process and plow ahead on projects can backfire and create problems in the long term, particularly in efforts to engage disadvantaged community stakeholders like the residents at the Jobs-Plus planning table.[15]

In addition to this process-product tension, the Jobs-Plus collaboratives were likely to confront other challenges that routinely complicate collaborative undertakings, including the following:

- *Conflicting goals and missions.* Collaborative efforts to develop new service approaches and improve coordination of existing ones are often impeded by differences in the organizational missions of the partner agencies. Such conflicts make it difficult for staff from different agencies to find common ground and overcome their concern with autonomy and "turf." Furthermore, in America's pluralistic political system, public and community-based agencies are often founded to serve a particular constituency. Collaboration threatens to blur an agency's specialized mission, thereby potentially undermining its accountability to its constituent base. As one scholar emphasizes:

  > The obstacles are formidable because they stem from fundamental properties of organizational systems. Each agency seeks to preserve its autonomy and independence. Organizational routines are difficult to synchronize. Goals overlap but are not identical. Constituents bring different expectations and pressures to bear on each agency. Managers try to minimize the uncertainty of their own environments but are less concerned with minimizing uncertainty for others.[16]

  Even when the perceived interests of the agencies are closely aligned and agency representatives are willing to collaborate, numerous bureaucratic practices and statutory and regulatory restrictions can impose practical obstacles to collaboration. Chapter 4 of this report chronicles the efforts of the Jobs-Plus partner agencies to coordinate their services better in the face of incompatible data management systems, conflicting eligibility criteria and philosophies, and different performance standards.

- *Cultural and communication conflicts.* Differences in the organizational cultures of partner agencies and the individual behavioral and communication styles of their representatives can be another impediment to successful collaboration.[17] Differences relating to race, ethnicity, class, status, and power among collaborating partners can be especially divisive and interfere with the partners' ability to develop trust; to listen, understand,

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[15]See Aspen Institute (1997) for a general discussion of this issue.

[16]Weiss, 1987, p. 95. See also Gray, 1985; Leonard, 1999; Martinson, 1999; McNeely, 1995; Dunkle and Surles, 1998; Bardach, 1998.

[17]Bardach, 1998; Martinson, 1999; Melaville and Blank, 1991.

and respect each other; and to feel comfortable within the group.[18] Some studies of community development initiatives suggest that these kinds of tensions are likely to be particularly strong between the professional staff from partner agencies or foundations and the community residents.[19] Chapter 6 of this report shows how the Jobs-Plus collaboratives were particularly at risk of debilitating cultural and communication conflicts in bringing together middle-class professionals from public agencies with community stakeholders from public housing developments, who generally differed widely from the professionals in terms of education, income, and, in some sites, ethnic or racial backgrounds.

- *Leadership problems.* Leadership is widely recognized as an essential ingredient for the success of any collaborative effort, but the demands of leadership in this context differ from what they are in more traditional organizational settings. As one team of authors writes:

> Traditional leaders frequently have a narrow range of expertise, speak a language that can be understood only by their peers, are used to being in control, and relate to the people with whom they work as followers or subordinates rather than partners. Collaborations, by contrast, need boundary-spanning leaders who understand and appreciate different partners' perspectives, can bridge their diverse cultures, and are comfortable sharing ideas, resources, and power.[20]

Such skilled leaders are often hard to come by, and deficiencies in leadership are a commonly cited reason for poor collaborative performance.[21] The various chapters of this report underscore the importance to the Jobs-Plus programs of leaders who appreciated the practical requirements of shared decisionmaking for an employment initiative that depended on the involvement of a variety of government systems and nongovernmental organizations.

- *Different challenges over time.* Several experts suggest that interagency collaboration is a developmental or capacity-building process that moves through successive phases or stages that build on each other and lay the groundwork for the next phase or stage.[22] Design and implementation phases are distinct stages that often pose different operational challenges for the collaborative partners and program staff, requiring them to use

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[18]Ferguson, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995; Aspen Institute, 1997.

[19]Halpern, 1995; McNeely, 1995; Pitcoff, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995; Aspen Institute, 1997.

[20]Lasker, Weiss, and Miller, 2000, p. 15.

[21]See, for example, Pitt, Brown, and Hirota, 1999, p. 23.

[22]Gray, 1985; Bardach, 1998; Melaville and Blank, 1991. Ferguson (1999) has written in particular about the key element of trust-building as a developmental process and has identified several steps or aspects in that process.

different skills and expertise, take on different roles and responsibilities, and develop different ways of relating to each other. As a result, new tensions are likely to emerge, progress may be stalled, relationships that were working well may fall apart, and individuals representing the partnering entities may leave their jobs, potentially taking with them knowledge and commitments that have taken considerable time and effort to build.[23]

Building on Preexisting Relationships

Given the obstacles described above, and in light of the fact that many attempts at collaboration in the past have failed to live up to their promise, successful collaboration over Jobs-Plus could not be taken for granted. The national designers therefore selected for this demonstration a set of sites with at least some prior collaborative experience. ("We're a collaborative city," a partner in Chattanooga explained. "Collaboration is what Dayton does." Similar comments were heard in other sites too.) To the extent that the partner agencies had worked together on common projects and had sent representatives to the Jobs-Plus collaboratives who knew and trusted one another, they would have a stronger foundation on which to build for Jobs-Plus.[24]

The nature of these earlier partnerships varied. At some sites, they were built around housing authority initiatives. For example, St. Paul's Jobs-Plus collaborative was crafted out of a preexisting partnership among the housing authority, the Wilder Foundation, and the St. Paul Public Schools to provide education, child care, and employment services to residents at Mt. Airy Homes (the Jobs-Plus development in St. Paul). In contrast, Baltimore Jobs-Plus recruited its collaborative from organizations involved in revitalization efforts to transform the troubled Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood, where Gilmor Homes (its Jobs-Plus development) is located. Many of these same organizations were also working together on Baltimore's federal Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Communities initiative, which covered much of the same area.[25] In Dayton and Chattanooga, the earlier partner-

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[23]For a general discussion, see Aspen Institute, 1997. For an analysis of this phenomenon in specific initiatives, see Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997; Gitell and Newman, 1998.

[24]Interagency networks have been shown to rely heavily on "historical patterns of collaboration, personal relationships, and trust," rather than formal contractual agreements, to enforce commitments among the partners; see Milward and Provan, 2000, p. 249.

[25]Baltimore illustrates the wide range of prior collaborative undertakings involving the housing authority and other Jobs-Plus partners in some sites. Here, in addition to the Community Building Partnership (a collaborative formed to oversee the revitalization of the Sandtown-Winchester area) and the Empowerment Zone, many of the partners have worked together on a HOPE VI Urban Revitalization Demonstration initiative (not in Gilmor Homes), a Step-Up program (a HUD-sponsored resident apprenticeship construction training program), the Family Self-Sufficiency program, the Sandtown-Winchester Community Center (which includes neighborhood emergency services, outreach, and referral to human services), and the Baltimore New Compact Schools, a partnership between the Community Building Partnership and the Baltimore City Public Schools.

ships were created for the purposes of reforming the welfare and/or workforce development systems. In Dayton, the Jobs-Plus collaborative was drawn from the Job Center Work Group, which created Montgomery County's mammoth one-stop job center of public and private social service and employment agencies. Since many of these earlier collaboratives are still functioning, many Jobs-Plus partners interact concurrently within multiple, overlapping networks. This keeps Jobs-Plus connected to a much a broader set of interagency networks than would otherwise be the case, raising the local profile of the collaborative and program.

In sharp contrast to these interagency partnerships, the prospect of engaging public housing residents as partners at the planning table was a novel and daunting challenge to most of the partner agencies, which had hitherto related to the residents only as service agencies for disadvantaged clients. The residents, with a few exceptions, came to the Jobs-Plus collaboratives as marginal, "low-power" stakeholders who lacked the independent power base of resources and professional alliances that their agency counterparts had. To varying degrees across the sites, the housing authorities had officially encouraged resident input on other initiatives, but often these efforts had not ventured much beyond requests for letters of support from the resident council for housing authority decisions. Often resident input was not aggressively solicited, sometimes even on such critical issues as building modernization or safety issues in the developments. The housing authorities did engage residents as volunteers or paid staff in the operation of particular programs, such as recreation and service programs in the developments. In general, however, the relationship between landlord and tenants was fundamentally unequal, and the housing authorities had disproportionate power over critical aspects of the residents' lives. Sometimes, sharp divisions also arose over managerial policies.[26] As Chapter 5 reveals, the tensions between the residents and the housing authority at some sites subsequently spilled over into collaborative proceedings and disrupted progress on Jobs-Plus.

In sum, each city in the demonstration had a foundation of interagency alliances on which to build collaborative relationships for Jobs-Plus. But none of these preexisting partners had ever attempted to work together on a jointly designed, funded, and operated employment initiative as ambitious as Jobs-Plus, especially one that engaged public housing residents as partners in decisionmaking. Jobs-Plus was therefore a novel challenge for all partners.

Analytical Approach for Assessing Collaboration in Jobs-Plus

This study will describe, assess, and try to draw public policy and program implementation lessons from the experiences of the Jobs-Plus sites in building new interagency and resident partnerships for Jobs-Plus. It addresses five major questions:

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[26]As described in Chapter 5, this included "one-strike" laws that permit the housing authority to evict an entire household from the development if a member commits a felony or houses someone who has a felony record, including sons and partners.

- How were the local partnerships organized?
- How well did the partnerships perform their collaborative functions?
- What factors influenced collaborative performance?
- What "smart practices"[27] seem conducive to better performance?
- What, with hindsight, did not work well?

The study uses qualitative data to explore these issues. Information about each of the collaboratives was collected primarily by on-site field researchers, through interviews with agency partners, residents, and project staff; direct observations of meetings among the local partners; and analysis of program documents. These data are not suitable for constructing *precise* indicators of the collaboratives' performance. Nor do they make it possible to rank the sites with any precision according to the quality of collaborative performance or to analyze the causes of variation in their performance. However, the data do provide a rich empirical foundation for understanding the variety of challenges that the collaboratives encountered and the ways in which they functioned well or poorly. From this kind of evidence, it is possible to derive insights into "what it takes" to improve performance of the kinds of collaborative functions that advance the purposes of a place-based employment initiative like Jobs-Plus.

In assessing how well the collaboratives performed, the study considers, first, how far they progressed in operating Jobs-Plus as a joint enterprise, rather than as just a housing authority program. In particular, it explores the efforts of the collaboratives to follow the three principles established by the national designers: shared investment, coordinated service delivery, and inclusive decisionmaking. Second, the report considers the collaboratives' "productivity" — that is, their success in assisting substantial numbers of residents by getting the three components of Jobs-Plus in place at a saturation level within a reasonable period of time.

In attempting to understand how well — or how poorly — the collaboratives performed according to these two criteria, the report examines the following factors:

- Opportunities or obstacles in the local environment (for example, the partners' prior relationships, the requirements of and resources for welfare reform, the efforts to restructure local workforce development systems);
- The selection of agency and resident delegates to the collaboratives;

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[27]This term is derived from Bardach (1998), who criticizes the term "best practice" because it focuses too narrowly on specific techniques without explaining how they have produced their presumed outcomes. In contrast, the term "smart practice" draws attention to the way in which a practice takes advantage of opportunities in the environment and efficiently creates something of value.

- The governance mechanisms and other strategies that the collaboratives adopted for involving stakeholders in program development and oversight;
- The leadership practices of those in charge of the collaboratives and the programs;
- The kinds of institutional adaptations that partner agencies made to overcome bureaucratic obstacles in providing coordinated and comprehensive service delivery for Jobs-Plus;
- The contributions of residents to program development and the individual and organizational capacity-building efforts needed for this purpose; and
- The efforts of MDRC staff and those of the national partners and other technical assistance providers to strengthen the collaboratives and Jobs-Plus programs.

Conclusion

This report cannot tell the full story of collaboration in Jobs-Plus because the demonstration is not yet nearing its end. With roughly four years of experience to examine, however, it is possible to learn a great deal about the challenges, added value, and trade-offs of different collaborative approaches to increase employment among public housing residents. Future reports will continue to analyze program implementation across the Jobs-Plus sites and will assess the program's effectiveness, permitting further opportunities to consider the longer-term payoff of these collaborative efforts.

The remainder of the report is organized as follows:

- Chapter 2 discusses the membership of the collaboratives and the kinds of resource investments that the various partners have made in the project at each site. It also provides an overview of Jobs-Plus's programmatic structure and the contributions of the collaboratives so far to program development.
- Chapter 3 analyzes the ways in which the collaboratives have attempted to engage in collective decisionmaking and the various venues, formal and informal, that they have adopted for this purpose over time.
- Chapter 4 focuses on efforts of institutional partners to provide better-coordinated services for Jobs-Plus, and it highlights the institutional adaptations they have made to overcome bureaucratic impediments to this effort.
- Chapters 5 and 6 intensively explore the collaborative experiences of two key partners. Chapter 5 examines the role of the public housing authorities and the critical need for them to make institutional adaptations in order to implement a multi-agency employment initiative in their housing developments. Chapter 6 describes efforts across the sites to engage residents as partners in designing and delivering this place-based program in a manner that is credible and useful to fellow residents.

- Chapter 7 offers conclusions and lessons for the possible use of collaboration in future attempts to implement the Jobs-Plus model — and in other efforts to bring public agencies and community stakeholders together to improve service delivery or address community concerns.

- Appendix A offers a brief review of attempts at collaboration in other initiatives to improve the lives of low-income families, and Appendix B lists the funding and in-kind contributions of the collaborative partners at each of the Jobs-Plus sites.

Previous publications on Jobs-Plus discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the demonstration, the larger policy issues that the program is designed to address, the research design being used to evaluate the program, and the sites' early implementation experiences.[28] Later reports and papers will examine further lessons on implementing the program's main components; the responses of residents to the program's opportunities; and the effectiveness of the program in improving labor market, welfare, and quality-of-life outcomes among residents in the Jobs-Plus housing developments, compared with people living in similar developments in each city.[29]

[28]Riccio, 1999; see also Bloom, 2000; Riccio, 1998; Bloom, 1999.

[29]The selection of Jobs-Plus and comparison developments was done through a random assignment process. See Riccio, 1998.

Chapter 2

The Places, Programs, and Partners

Introduction

In 1996, the process of forming Jobs-Plus collaboratives got under way as public and private agencies and public housing residents in numerous cities joined together to prepare a statement of interest in the national demonstration. The national designers set the stage for collaboration by requiring that the applications come from local partnerships instead of from the housing authority or any other single agency. The applicant cities were asked to show that they could bring together the required partners, that the mandated partners were committed to the project and to working in a partnership with each other, and that at least some of the key groups had worked successfully together in the past. In some cities, the local housing authority recruited organizations to join it in a new partnership; in others, another government agency took the first steps to convene the group. After an extended application and assessment process, a final group of seven sites (out of forty-two cities that initially submitted statements of interest) was selected to begin the main design phase of the demonstration in March 1997.[1] This chapter describes the seven sites, their Jobs-Plus programs, the organizations that were recruited for the collaboratives, and the resources and expertise that those partners brought to the project.

The Jobs-Plus Sites

The seven cities in which Jobs-Plus was launched are very diverse geographically, demographically, and economically. They included a small city in the South (Chattanooga, Tennessee); moderate-size cities on the East Coast (Baltimore, Maryland), in the Midwest (Cleveland and Dayton, Ohio, and St. Paul, Minnesota), and in the Pacific Northwest (Seattle, Washington); and a major metropolitan center on the West Coast (Los Angeles, California). One public housing development was selected for Jobs-Plus in each city, with the exception of Los Angeles, where two developments were chosen. All eight developments consist of low-rise housing, ranging from 300 to over 500 units each.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 present selected demographic and economic characteristics of the households in the sites. As shown in Table 2.2, low employment levels and high poverty and welfare receipt rates characterized all these housing developments at the time of their selection. But the racial and ethnic composition of the residents varied considerably (Table 2.1). In about half the developments, almost all the residents were African-American; in others, the majority were Latino or Southeast Asian. At least 11 languages were spoken at St. Paul Jobs-Plus, and more than 22 were spoken at Seattle Jobs-Plus. The diversity of residents and

[1] See Riccio, 1999.

Table 2.1

Selected Characteristics of Households and Household Heads Living in Jobs-Plus Developments in 1997

Characteristic	Baltimore (Gilmor Homes)	Chattanooga (Harriet Tubman Homes)	Cleveland[a] (Woodhill Homes Estates)	Dayton (DeSoto Bass Courts)	Los Angeles (Imperial Courts)	Los Angeles (William Mead Homes)	St. Paul (Mt. Airy Homes)	Seattle (Rainier Vista)
Characteristics of Heads of Households								
Race/ethnicity (%)								
Black, non-Hispanic	99	94	99	98	78	6	24	42[b]
White, non-Hispanic	0	3	0	1	2	1	5	12
Hispanic	0	3	0	0	20	80	3	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	13[c]	65[d]	43[c]
Other[e]	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3
Female (%)	79	85	83	88	89	60	65	74
Elderly[f] (%)	16	12	3	8	8	15	8	16
Disabled (%)	30	27	11	22	16	17	27	31
Characteristics of Households								
Number of adults in household (%)								
One	83	89	90	89	71	44	46	63
Two or more	17	11	10	11	29	56	54	37
Number of children in household (%)								
None	56	35	37	32	23	34	10	34
One	22	22	34	29	25	20	13	29
Two	14	23	17	22	25	21	17	18
Three or more	8	20	11	17	27	24	59	18
Length of residence (%)								
Less than one year	5	15	11	18	6	2	6	9
Ten years or more	23	15	13	20	16	24	22	2
Number of occupied units	528	423	431	485	450	412	298	467

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on data from tenant rosters provided by housing authorities in October 1997.

NOTES: Distribitions may not total 100 percent because of rounding.

[a]Cleveland subsequently left the demonstration for reasons discussed in the text.

[b]Includes a large proportion of East African immigrants.

[c]Includes primarily Southeast Asian immigrants from Cambodia and Vietnam.

[d]Includes primarily Southeast Asian immigrants (mostly Hmong).

[e]Includes groups such as Native Americans/Alaskans and a small number of people for whom the data are ambiguous.

[f]People 62 years of age or older.

Table 2.2

Income Sources of Households in Jobs-Plus Developments in 1996

Income Source	Baltimore (Gilmor Homes)	Chattanooga (Harriet Tubman Homes)	Cleveland[a] (Woodhill Homes Estates)	Dayton (DeSoto Bass Courts)	Los Angeles (Imperial Courts)	Los Angeles (William Mead Homes)	St. Paul (Mt. Airy Homes)	Seattle (Rainier Vista)
Any income from (%):								
Wages	25	20	10	19	15	42	16	20
AFDC	46	73	54	56	70	46	n/a	52
Welfare[b]	85	90	69	82	93	75	87	85
Number of housing units	879[c]	362	508	510	481	414	297	481

SOURCE: Housing authority data reported to MDRC in 1996 as part of their Jobs-Plus application.

NOTES:

[a]Cleveland subsequently left the demonstration for reasons discussed in the text.

[b]Includes Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), state General Assistance (GA) payments, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

[c]Includes scattered-site housing units affiliated with Gilmor Homes, which the Housing Authority of Baltimore City included in the data.

language groups in some developments have added to the challenges of building effective collaboratives that can draw on a representative array of residents.

There were differences as well in the labor markets and housing conditions of the seven cities in which these housing developments are located. Nevertheless, 1990 Census data (not shown) indicate that the poverty rates of the census tracts in which six of the eight developments are located ranged from 49 to 74 percent, well above the 30 percent or 40 percent threshold commonly used to designate "high-poverty" areas.[2] Baltimore's Jobs-Plus development was mostly encompassed by a federal empowerment zone, while Seattle was adjacent to one.

The Jobs-Plus Programs: What Has Been Accomplished So Far?

The Jobs-Plus programs in each location evolved rather slowly from the time that the final group of sites was selected for the demonstration. Today, the programs are a visible presence in six of the seven cities originally selected. Cleveland is the main exception. A range of local factors there contributed to a shift in the interests of the local housing authority, so that supporting an employment demonstration limited to a single housing development was no longer feasible for the agency. Therefore, in November 1999, by mutual agreement of the housing authority, MDRC, and the lead funders of the national demonstration, Cleveland formally left the Jobs-Plus demonstration.[3] Seattle is also no longer in the demonstration, but for a different reason: The Seattle Housing Authority received a federal HOPE VI grant in 1999, which it is using to tear down and rebuild the aging Rainier Vista development in which Jobs-Plus is located. Because this will require disruptions to the program and the temporary dislocation of residents, Seattle's program is no longer suitable for the national demonstration. However, a Jobs-Plus program is continuing there as part of the HOPE VI community and supportive services plan, and an expanded Jobs-Plus collaborative continues to play an integral role in HOPE VI planning.[4]

At the six sites (seven housing developments) operating Jobs-Plus programs, facilities are in place, elements of all three program components have been implemented, and residents are being served and placed into jobs. The staff and activities are located in converted

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[2]See Riccio, 1999.

[3]By the end of Cleveland's participation in the demonstration, some basic education and job placement services were being operated by Jobs-Plus in the space allocated by the housing authority within the Woodhill Homes Estates development, but on a small scale. Moreover, key staff positions (for example, for case management and job development) were yet unfilled, and no significant plans for the financial incentives and community support for work components of Jobs-Plus had been prepared.

[4]According to HUD, housing authorities that receive HOPE VI Revitalization Grants must provide service packages that can help residents improve their life skills (e.g., financial management skills), secure living-wage jobs, and relocate to a new neighborhood if they choose to do so. Community and Supportive Services (CSS) funds are to be allocated to assist all original residents (whether or not they return to the site after revitalization) as well as families who move into the site following revitalization.

housing units, community centers, or other facilities at the developments. Although staffing structures vary by site, they typically include the following positions:

- A *project director* manages the program on a day-to-day basis;
- *Case managers* guide and monitor residents' efforts to prepare for, seek, and retain jobs;
- *Job developers* build program links with employers and locate job openings; and
- *Resident outreach workers* (also called *community organizers*) tell residents about Jobs-Plus and get them involved in the program.

Of the program's three components (employment-related services, financial incentives, and community supports for work), employment activities and support services are the most fully developed at this time. These operate in the same general sequence across sites. First, intensive *outreach and recruitment efforts* are directed at the residents in the developments. Residents have been hired as outreach workers and translators to ensure that members of the community are addressed in their primary languages. Next, residents who express interest in the program receive *intake, enrollment, and assessment services*, primarily on-site, by the case manager and employment specialists, often assisted by resident staff. This process permits the staff to orient residents to the program and to determine their readiness for employment and their service needs.[5] Jobs-Plus then offers residents a selection of *education, employment, and support services*. These include instruction in job search techniques and basic work habits and norms, job training, basic skills education, and job placement assistance. Job developers locate or develop job opportunities with local employers. In general, the programs have emphasized getting residents directly into jobs, rather than education and training activities, although a mix of opportunities is offered and efforts are routinely made to accommodate residents' preferences.

Jobs-Plus provides these employment services through a combination of *on-site services* by Jobs-Plus employees and colocated agency staff and *off-site programs* to which residents are referred. On-site employment resource centers or learning centers have been opened at all developments, and they typically offer computer-based job search services and instruction in basic education and computer literacy (for example, word-processing programs and Internet use). Off-site services include job preparation, training, and work experience opportunities. Support services include child care, transportation, and referrals for substance abuse treatment and help in dealing with domestic violence.

[5]For example, Seattle Jobs-Plus uses an intake form that resembles a generic job application form and that requires the resident to use a computer link to a job database. Staff observe how residents perform these tasks as a hands-on way to assess their skill needs.

Jobs-Plus in Baltimore: Gilmor Homes

Jobs-Plus in Baltimore occupies two remodeled units in Gilmor Homes. The Jobs-Plus office is staffed by the project director, a case manager, a job developer, an administrative assistant, and two resident aides. The Resident Empowerment Center (REC) houses community support for work activities. It is staffed by a community outreach specialist and a resident aide, who conduct door-to-door outreach for Jobs-Plus, produce a newsletter, and organize programs that build community or help residents maintain employment, such as a driver's education program.

All residents who express interest in Jobs-Plus receive an individual orientation and meet with the case manager and a resident aide to assess their work readiness and service needs. For job preparation and placement services, TANF recipients are referred to the Work Matters program of the housing authority and the Office of Employment and Development. The others are referred either to the on-site job developer or to Eden Jobs, a collaborative member. A "personal development program" through the Center for Mind and Esteem Development is required for all TANF recipients who register with the Work Matters program, but it is open to other residents as well. The case manager also helps residents enroll in education or job training programs and secure support services. TANF recipients can have their voucher applications for child care and other support services processed on-site at the Jobs-Plus office, rather than at the Department of Social Services. Transportation stipends or bus tokens are available to Jobs-Plus participants to go to a job interview or a new job or an appointment with a service agency.

Improving the health of the Gilmor Homes community and removing health-related barriers to employment are major priorities for Jobs-Plus in Baltimore. The Vision for Health Consortium (VHC) of public and private health organizations has on-site facilities where Jobs-Plus participants can obtain an individual or family health assessment and referrals to health services, including substance abuse treatment funded by the housing authority's Family Support Services.

Jobs-Plus and various collaborative partner agencies have also agreed to hire up to 10 residents at a time over one to three years in work experience positions. The housing authority pays for their salaries and benefits using federal Economic Development/Self-Sufficiency (ED/SS) funds. These resident employees offer other residents an approachable face when they come for services, and they increase the visibility of Jobs-Plus at these partner agencies. To date, eight residents have been hired in these positions.

In November 2000, Jobs-Plus in Baltimore implemented a financial incentives plan that reduces the percentage of countable income used to calculate working families' rent, from the traditional 30 percent to 20 percent. In addition, half the rent paid is put into an escrow account, so that a participant who maintains regular employment over a 12-month period will receive the escrow money back to be used at his/her discretion. As of the end of 2000, this program had enrolled 40 residents.

The selection of services shows considerable responsiveness to clients' needs and local conditions. For example, Seattle Jobs-Plus helps its Southeast Asian refugees in the development get employment permits, and it holds "paperwork nights" to help residents deal with anything from unpaid library fines and parking tickets to credit problems that can appear on employment background checks and would require workday time to resolve.

Finally, *on-site case management* is provided by Jobs-Plus staff in all the demonstration sites. This is critical for tracking residents across services and jobs and for coordinating between on-site and off-site services.

The second Jobs-Plus component, financial work incentives, takes the form of changes in rent rules to reduce the degree to which rents increase as residents' earnings grow. Because these incentives are subject to HUD approval and funding, unexpected delays in obtaining that funding kept most sites from implementing this component until mid to late 2000. However, issues arose between HUD and the congressional committee that oversees HUD's total departmental budget over how to cover the potential losses in rent revenues to local housing authorities that might result from these rent reforms, leading to months of negotiations and well over a year's delay in the sites' ability to finalize and implement their incentives plan. The funding problem was eventually solved, although not until the spring of 2000. Consequently, a feature of Jobs-Plus that was widely expected to galvanize residents' support for and involvement in the program instead had a demoralizing effect on all the partners and threatened to undermine the credibility of the program among the broader population of residents. The St. Paul housing authority chose not to wait, however. It began implementing the first stage of its incentives plan at the end of 1998 and absorbed the costs of the rent reductions directly.

The sites have taken different approaches to these work incentives. For example, some are reducing the proportion of "countable" income that must be paid in rent — traditionally, 30 percent. Others favor a flat-rent approach that keeps a family's rent the same even if their income increases. In addition to this rent reform, the sites are promoting better awareness and use of other available benefits that can help "make work pay," such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

Progress in defining and implementing the third Jobs-Plus component, community support for work, has been slowest. The programs are now focusing more attention on ways to broaden efforts to implement this component. Although a variety of approaches are being tried, most sites are currently designing and implementing a network of "building captains" or "area captains"; these are residents from different sections of the development who are trained to communicate information about Jobs-Plus opportunities and job openings to their neighbors and who coordinate informal, neighbor-to-neighbor assistance to help residents get and retain jobs, such as assistance with child care or transportation. Other sites are using a similar network of residents as program "extension workers" not tied to any particular section of the development. It is hoped that the other residents will feel comfortable with and receptive to help from members of their community.

Jobs-Plus in Chattanooga: Harriet Tubman Homes

The activities of Jobs-Plus in Chattanooga were restructured during the last quarter of 2000 to improve program operations and outcomes. The restructured program revolves around the Jobs-Plus Resource Center and is staffed by the project director, community outreach specialists, an intake specialist, a case manager, a counselor, and a job developer. The staff members are primarily residents, but they work together to pursue Jobs-Plus's employment goals with personnel assigned to the Resource Center by various local service agencies.

Jobs-Plus initially engages residents through a process of outreach, intake, and assessment. Community outreach specialists inform the residents about Jobs-Plus by canvassing the development, knocking on doors, and making themselves generally available in the community for conversations about Jobs-Plus and residents' employment needs. The intake specialist then provides further information about the program to residents who come to Jobs-Plus and arranges for them to meet with the case manager. Case management is a vital aspect of the program and involves working with residents to assess their employment and social service needs; developing immediate and long-term employment goals (which, for TANF recipients, are consistent with the Personal Responsibility Plans that they have drawn up with the welfare agency); referrals for support services such as child care, substance abuse treatment, and work clothing; and follow-up through phone calls and home visits to assess the appropriateness of these referrals.

The job developer at the local Career Services Center who is assigned to Jobs-Plus participants assesses their job readiness and provides them with any needed "soft-skills" training, job coaching, referrals to education or training programs, and job placement assistance. These efforts are supported by Jobs-Plus staff, who monitor the initial work experiences of the residents, provide them with continuous counseling to promote job retention, and intervene as liaisons with employers as necessary.

Other program highlights include basic education instruction, certified nurse instruction, and off-site activities by collaborative partners, including training in office technology, customer services, vehicular transportation, and construction.

In January 2001, Jobs-Plus in Chattanooga implemented a financial incentives plan that involves a two-step rent schedule that figures rent at 10 percent of countable income (for 16 months) and at 20 percent of countable income (for 20 months) for working residents at Harriet Tubman Homes. The plan also extends the time-limited rent ceilings for working residents to three years, in contrast to two years for all Chattanooga Housing Authority residents.

By the end of December 2000, Jobs-Plus programs had enrolled over 2,300 residents and had placed over 1,100 into jobs. Their cash operating budgets (not counting in-kind contributions) for 1999 ranged from $335,845 in Seattle to $902,676 in Baltimore. However, while these participation and budget numbers are significant, the intent to supply services and opportunities on a "saturation" level has not yet been achieved, and residents' participation in the program is not yet as extensive as was hoped would be the case by this time.[6]

The Partners and the Resources They Brought to the Table

As previously noted, the public housing authority, the welfare department, the JTPA agency, and the residents of the housing development were brought together as "mandatory partners" at each site. Each collaborative also recruited a variety of other local actors. Many of these are private, nonprofit organizations that were likely to serve Jobs-Plus participants in some capacity. These partners usually brought relevant expertise instead of funding to Jobs-Plus.

The number of "active" partners in each of the collaboratives in the spring of 2000 or, in the case of Cleveland, the fall of 1999, ranged from 9 organizations in Dayton to 16 in Los Angeles.[7] To be considered an active partner, an organization had to be involved in the collaborative in at least one of the following ways: in a *strategic decisionmaking or advisory capacity* (for example, attending collaborative meetings or working behind the scenes to provide input and feedback about the program); in a *financial capacity* (that is, expressing commitment to the goals of the program through monetary and/or in-kind contributions); and in an *operational capacity* (for example, serving as a direct service provider or assisting in the management of the program).

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[6]Bloom, 2000.

[7]See Appendix B. In some cases, it has been difficult to establish whether or not a particular partner is still active. At various times throughout the demonstration, some partners have left the collaborative without ever formally terminating their partnership. They may continue to be invited to meetings, but simply not show up. Thus, the sites may have some "name only" collaborative members.

Jobs-Plus in Dayton: DeSoto Bass Courts

Jobs-Plus in Dayton is distinguished by its alliance with Montgomery County's "one-stop" Job Center — a huge, multi-service center housing numerous social service and employment agencies. Although Jobs-Plus does refer residents to the center for services, the residents are now able to access many critical services directly through Jobs-Plus. The program works closely with the Job Center to ensure that its on-site services closely mirror those of the one-stop.

At DeSoto Bass Courts, a Jobs-Plus Center was established to house the program's services and activities. These include an Urban League job readiness program that consists of a series of workshops that cover résumé writing and basic job search skills and also address issues that can hinder sustained employment, such as domestic violence. Three case managers are available to the residents to assess their employment service needs, refer them to the appropriate local providers, and monitor their progress across jobs. The job developer helps locate appropriate job openings.

The Job Resource Computer Learning Center downstairs offers a direct computer link to the Job Center's on-line Job Bank, an electronic posting of all employment opportunities listed by employers in the Dayton area. Residents can also find software to prepare their résumés and get word-processing and Internet instruction. The center has provided residents with Microsoft Certification Training, and it is home to the Jobs-Plus Youth Program.

Jobs-Plus in Dayton emphasizes the importance of providing services to children and youth in the effort to break the cycle of poverty in the development. The Jobs-Plus Youth Program offers after-school recreational activities, such as photography, golf, and soccer, and a tutorial program aimed at enhancing reading and math skills. There is also a Youth Leadership Training program that fosters leadership and conflict resolution skills. These are important institutional supports for working parents. Older youth can get after-school and summer jobs as program assistants.

In the effort to build community support for work, Jobs-Plus has been working with the resident council to recruit and train "building captains" to inform residents about Jobs-Plus and support their employment efforts. The captains are paid a stipend in the form of a rent credit.

The financial incentives plan in Dayton eliminates the income-based rent calculation and replaces it with a two-step, flat-rent approach. The flat rents are set at a rate lower than what most full-time workers would pay if their rent remained income-based. Under this plan, rent does not increase with increases in earnings, so families can keep more of their earned income. Rent credits (up to $599 per year) are also available to residents who volunteer for community service, including efforts that help support the employment of other residents.

Jobs-Plus in Los Angeles: Imperial Courts and William Mead Homes

Los Angeles is the only city with a Jobs-Plus program operating in two housing developments. Jobs-Plus is administered as a single program but is tailored to the different populations and circumstances of each development. The project director works out of the housing authority's downtown office but spends considerable time at each location. At Imperial Courts, Jobs-Plus is located in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles and serves a predominantly African-American resident population; Latinos make up roughly 30 percent of the development's population. The main program offices are in a housing unit adjacent to another social service program, but there is additional office, classroom, and meeting space at the community center in the middle of the development. Across the city, in East Los Angeles, Jobs-Plus is located also at William Mead Homes, where the resident population is predominantly Latino but includes a sizable number of Southeast Asians. The staff conduct their work in the cramped rooms of a renovated housing unit while a new community center is being constructed.

Under the leadership of the current project director, the two programs share many key features. The core program staff at each site are employees of the housing authority and include a site coordinator, case managers, a job developer, community outreach workers, and administrative assistants. The case managers (some of whom are residents) assess residents' needs for employment-related assistance and support services and then refer them to appropriate job openings or service providers. The job developer works closely with the case managers to determine suitable job placements and to cultivate employer contacts. Various public and nonprofit agencies have also assigned staff to Jobs-Plus, including part-time employment services workers from the welfare department (at both sites) and a full-time caseworker from the Employment Development Department (at William Mead Homes). Jobs-Plus can direct the residents to computer learning centers that the housing authority in Los Angeles has established at its developments, to use the Internet for job search and to get computer-assisted basic education and help in writing résumés and letters of application.

Jobs-Plus in Los Angeles emphasizes resident empowerment through leadership development and civic participation. The programs work closely with the resident council and resident volunteers to sponsor community events and deliver services, such as food distribution. The site coordinator at William Mead Homes arranged for the development to be designated as a polling place for the national election in November 2000 to promote resident voter turnout. In the same month, Jobs-Plus arranged with a community organization to train residents at both developments to

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Jobs-Plus in Los Angeles (continued)

become "community coaches," which will be the centerpiece of the site's community support for work component. Working closely with the program's job developers, these coaches will connect their communities with employers and job opportunities. They are being taught about the local economy and labor markets and how to negotiate with employers. At William Mead Homes, the Youth Opportunities Program works with students and dropouts, ages 14-21, to help them complete high school, develop marketable skills, and explore options for college. As of December 2000, 22 young people were participating in the new program. Jobs-Plus in Imperial Courts hopes to bring this program to its youth.

In June 2000, Jobs-Plus in Los Angeles implemented a financial incentives program that freezes the rents of working residents for 18 months. A longer-term application of flat rents will then be applied so that rents of working residents will not keep rising as a result of earning higher incomes or having more than one household member in the workforce. As of December 2000, approximately 201 residents of William Mead Homes and approximately 150 residents of Imperial Courts were enrolled in the program, and the number continues to increase each month.

Jobs-Plus in Imperial Courts is poised for expansion. Its plans include a mobile health unit to provide free checkups for children ages 0-19, a high school diploma preparation class, monthly money management seminars, and support for women entering nontraditional jobs. Longtime plans to build an on-site child care center will hopefully be realized this year. In contrast, William Mead Homes has space constraints that limit the services it can offer on-site. But this has not deterred the program from sponsoring an array of community events outdoors, from Father's Day celebrations to job fairs.

Contributions of the Housing Authority

The collaboratives across the sites designated the local housing authority as their lead agency.[8] This was done in recognition of the nature and disproportionate size of the housing authority's material contributions to Jobs-Plus and the widely shared view that the housing authority, together with the residents, had the most to gain or lose from the success of Jobs-Plus. The housing authority is the program's landlord, since it provides the facilities for this place-based program, in many cases taking housing units off-line and converting them into office space. The housing authority is also Jobs-Plus's fiduciary agent, responsible for holding and disbursing grants earmarked (all or in part) for the program, most of which are raised by the housing authority itself. These include grants obtained through mainstream HUD funding streams, particularly the Economic Development/Social Services (ED/SS) grants and

[8]The designers of the demonstration believed that one partner in each city would have to assume a significant leadership role, but they left the selection to the collaboratives themselves.

the Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), as well as some private monies raised from foundations, including the national sponsors of the Jobs-Plus demonstration. These have been the most flexible monies available to the program to use for its staffing and operational needs. In addition, some or most Jobs-Plus staff at almost all the sites are housing authority employees. St. Paul is a major exception. There, none of the Jobs-Plus staff are directly employed by the housing authority. However, some of them, including the program manager, are employed by the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation and the St. Paul Public Schools, which have contracts with the housing authority. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, Jobs-Plus would depend heavily on the commitment and support of the local housing authority. But the degree to which the housing authority has been the "driving force" in shaping the initiative has varied across sites.

Contributions of Other Public Agency Partners

The welfare agency has been a significant partner at all sites in linking Jobs-Plus with the broader welfare reform agenda and welfare-to-work initiatives of each locality. Its representatives on the collaborative have come from the Income Maintenance or Welfare-to-Work Divisions, or both. The welfare agency's material contributions to the program, however, have usually been in-kind, particularly in the form of agency staff who have been outstationed at Jobs-Plus offices in an effort to better coordinate the delivery of its services with those of the program.

JTPA, or Private Industry Council (PIC), staff and, subsequently, the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) represent the local workforce development system on the collaboratives. To encourage their participation, the U.S. Department of Labor made available to them special funds for the purpose of hiring job developers for Jobs-Plus. At all but the Cleveland site, these agencies took advantage of this offer and put up the required matching funds. In addition, the local JTPA agencies in several cities channeled to Jobs-Plus some money from their allotment of federal Welfare-to-Work grants.[9] The job developers and employment specialists (or "job coaches") of most of the programs have been on the payroll of the local JTPA agencies but are outstationed at the housing developments. Most of the collaboratives have also included other public institutions, such as public secondary schools that provide on-site basic education classes, public transportation agencies, government offices like the local mayor's office, health agencies, and community colleges and universities. In general, the public agencies involved with Jobs-Plus have provided in-kind contributions and have resisted investing flexible dollars that the program could use to pay for staff, administrative costs, overhead expenses, service contracts, or other expenditures.[10]

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[9]These are funds administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and made available to states and localities for innovative employment services targeted toward hard-to-employ TANF recipients.

[10]None of the sites has yet tapped the TANF resources for flexible dollars, despite the fact that revised TANF regulations enacted in 1999 would allow them to do so.

Jobs-Plus in St. Paul: Mt. Airy Homes

Jobs-Plus in St. Paul was built on past efforts to provide employment, education, and child care services at Mt. Airy Homes by the local housing authority, the St. Paul Public Schools, and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. These agencies, along with residents and the Ramsey County Community Human Services Department, subsequently became the key collaborative partners for Jobs-Plus. Most of Jobs-Plus's activities take place in the offices and spacious meeting rooms and classrooms of the beautifully designed Mt. Airy Community Center.

The program staff provided by these agencies help residents with job search, employment applications, and interviews. They have also organized job fairs and developed customized training programs in partnership with local employers and technical schools (for example, to prepare certified nursing assistants). They conduct workshops on "life skills" for economic self-sufficiency, such as budgeting, consumer fraud, and homeownership. Residents also have on-line access in the center's career resource room to a countywide database of job openings and to a computer lab with educational programming and Internet access that is staffed by a part-time, licensed adult basic education teacher. The staff can refer residents to an array of local support services for employment, including referrals for child care, driver's education, and mental health and substance abuse treatment. On-site support services include a sliding-fee child care program available to Jobs-Plus participants who are employed or in training. In addition, the program has made available various after-school and summer activities for youth. The welfare department also has assigned an employment counselor and a financial worker to the development. The latter helps TANF recipients at Mt. Airy process their paperwork for welfare, child care, and other benefits.

Since many residents at Mt. Airy are foreign born, including a large number of Hmong refugee families, Jobs-Plus offers classes in English as a Second Language (ESL), a Hmong women's group, and a Southeast Asian Adjustment Program that addresses mental health and cultural conflict issues. The center also includes an after-school tutoring program for youth and a Head Start program. In its efforts to develop a stronger sense of community in this ethnically diverse development, Jobs-Plus has tried to increase residents' interaction across ethnic lines, such as by holding cultural appreciation events, back-to-school fairs, and community picnics.

Jobs-Plus in St. Paul implemented its financial incentives plan in the fall of 1998. Participants received one month's free rent for enrolling in Jobs-Plus. In addition, during the first year of the plan, 100 percent of their earned income was disregarded in the calculation of their monthly rent. In years 2 through 5 of the plan, rent calculations are based on a flat-rent model and are graduated over time to reflect a percentage (after utility adjustments) of ceiling rents established by the housing authority, ranging from 45 percent in year 2 to 90 percent in year 5. Other provisions include rent credits for sustained employment and some rent reductions during periods of unemployment.

Contributions of the Residents

The demonstration's designers looked to the residents primarily for their knowledge about the housing development, to help the collaborative and program staff design a program that the community would likely support and use. This was considered critical because it was believed that residents' perceptions of past unmet promises and failed programs would make them cynical about this new initiative. The residents were represented on the collaboratives initially by the existing resident council, a formal body elected by residents of a development to represent their interests as tenants to the housing authority. At several sites, a resident "leadership team" separate from the resident council (or with overlapping membership) has been formed to create a platform for broader resident input. Some of these resident organizations made contributions to Jobs-Plus from Tenant Opportunity Program (TOPS) grants they had won from HUD for resident-directed initiatives. These amounts ranged from $10,000 to $50,000. In several sites, residents themselves were vendors of some services for Jobs-Plus, particularly as providers of in-home child care.

Involving Employers

From the beginning of the demonstration, it was widely believed that employers should be included in the partnership, because Jobs-Plus is essentially an employment program. The demonstration's designers as well as the local partners embraced this notion. As one member of the Chattanooga Jobs-Plus collaborative put it, "Social service providers cannot sell ideas to businessmen." Employers, it was believed, could provide valuable input to the collaborative and to program staff in preparing residents for work and marketing them to other employers. As collaborative members, company representatives might also provide the program with access to job opportunities within their own firms for Jobs-Plus participants.

Some collaboratives recruited members from associations of local employers (for example, the Chamber of Commerce) as well as individual businesspeople.[11] For the most part, however, employers and their representatives have been missing from the partnerships, primarily because it was difficult to interest employers in an extended planning enterprise. The employers simply wanted ready access to qualified workers to fill openings as they emerged. The collaboratives came to believe that it was fruitless to approach the business community until they had a program in place and residents who were ready to work. In describing the Baltimore collaborative's efforts to recruit employers, a housing authority representative said:

> We went too early to the Greater Baltimore Committee, which is the business component in the city, to talk about the concept and get their involvement. Basically what they said to us was, "When you have an idea in mind come

[11]The Chattanooga Jobs-Plus collaborative had among its original partners a prominent local businessman who owned a child care business. He hoped to involve residents in it and, eventually, to transfer parts of it to them. In Dayton, a local businesswoman who headed the PIC became the chairperson of the collaborative.

Jobs-Plus in Seattle: Rainier Vista

In August 1999, the Seattle Housing Authority was told it would receive federal HOPE VI funds to redevelop the Rainier Vista public housing development into a mixed-income housing community. In view of the dislocation of residents and massive infusion of service funds that HOPE VI would bring, Rainier Vista was removed from the national Jobs-Plus demonstration. But Jobs-Plus remains the cornerstone of employment and training services at Rainier Vista, evolving into "HOPE-Plus," a supportive services strategy that combines the employment saturation and community-building goals of Jobs-Plus with physical redevelopment. It also expands service provision to residents who are outside the labor force because of age or disability.

In this ethnically and linguistically diverse development, Jobs-Plus draws heavily on resident outreach workers from the major linguistic groups in the community to provide outreach in the resident's own language. Once in the program, residents undergo intake and assessment activities with a job coach. Residents with limited proficiency in English work with a job coach fluent in their own language and can enroll in vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at the Refugee Women's Alliance, a collaborating organization that has expertise in serving immigrants. Residents who are proficient in English are referred to the English-language job coach and undergo "personal effectiveness training" about employers' expectations and appropriate workplace behavior. The job developer works with employers to find suitable positions for residents. Job coaches also follow up with retention and wage progression services.

The Rainier Vista Leadership Team (RVLT), a council of 13 residents that has recently incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, has assumed extensive management responsibilities for the program, including the Job Resource Center. The City of Seattle recently awarded the RVLT a grant to create language- and culture-specific employment training modules. These modules will feature residents of the community and will cover topics such as interviewing for a job, learning basic computer skills, or asking for a raise. The RVLT is also preparing to take over the "Community Shares" program, a service exchange system designed to increase collaboration and support networks in the community. Based on the "Time Dollar" model, participants receive credit for contributing services to the community (for example, attending meetings, serving on committees, providing transportation, and tutoring). In exchange for credits accumulated, participants may then request services from other residents or may exchange their credits for a $50 reduction in rent or material resources, such as a personal computer.

The financial incentives program at Rainier Vista freezes a working resident's rent (or in some cases reduces it as well) for two years. The rent is then increased incrementally every two years until it reaches local market rates. As rent increases, a portion of the increase is deposited by the housing authority into an interest-bearing escrow account.

When residents enroll in the program, they are introduced to the job coaches and can begin the process of assessment, training, or job placement, in the program's effort to help working residents with job retention and career mobility.

> back to us. When you have it formulated, when you can specifically say what it is that you want, then come back to us."

Indeed, a place-based employment strategy directed at a single public housing development creates difficulties for formally engaging large employers as collaborative partners. The relatively small scale of the Jobs-Plus program and its population base severely limits its potential to provide a substantial and steady flow of qualified workers to fit a large employer's needs on a continuous basis. A Jobs-Plus program that operates across all public housing developments in a city may have a better chance of overcoming these constraints.[12]

In the meantime, connections to the business community have been achieved in a number of sites in a more practical way through the work of the program's job developers, rather than through collaborative membership. The job developers have tried to cultivate direct relationships with employers and business associations and networks (such as the Chamber of Commerce), encouraging them to look to Jobs-Plus as a valuable source of prepared, screened workers and prodding them to contact the program whenever job openings arise. In Baltimore, where the Jobs-Plus development is located in an empowerment zone, employers are also told of the tax advantages they would enjoy for hiring through the program. In Seattle, the job developer established relationships with employers who were willing to hire limited-English-speaking residents. All the programs have also organized job fairs at the housing developments, and these are attended by employers with job openings.

Several of the programs are also considering ways to develop relationships with employers in particular sectors of the economy — such as health care, hospitality services, and other service sectors — for which residents can be trained and placed. These kinds of direct connections with employers may ultimately benefit the program more than efforts to recruit them as collaborative partners. A collaborative member in St. Paul noted that "businesses would never have sat at the table for collaborative meetings anyway."

Contributions of Local Foundations

Local foundations have been among the most active and committed members of the Jobs-Plus collaboratives in three cities, and they view the program as furthering their own mission of fostering community improvement. In Baltimore, the Enterprise Foundation (an

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[12]The notion of having employers as advisors or stakeholders for employment programs serving disadvantaged clientele grew out of the success of such programs as the Center for Employment Training (CET), based in California (Cave, Bos, Doolittle, and Toussaint, 1993; Melendez, 1996; Kato, 1999), and Project Quest in San Antonio (Osterman and Lautsch, 1996). These programs did recruit employers from particular sectors with labor shortages for advisory boards during the organizing phases of the programs. But these programs were offering employers qualified job candidates with customized training in return for firm-specific information about skill needs and job commitments for successful trainees. Furthermore, these programs drew trainees from a sizable labor pool that could encompass an entire city or region; depending on the scale of their recruitment efforts, they offered trainees the prospect of desirable, well-paid employment. It was therefore worthwhile for an employer to sit on a program's advisory board, since his or her recommendations about sectors to target or skill sets to transmit would assure the firm of a continually renewing stream of qualified job candidates.

"operating" foundation that runs programs and usually does not make grants) has contributed cash to pay for child care services and the time of a senior official who has helped develop program activities and assisted in the preparation of funding proposals. In Chattanooga, the Lyndhurst Foundation and the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga have been among the strongest supporters of Jobs-Plus, not only investing time and resources but also keeping the housing authority at the table when senior-level agency support flagged. In St. Paul, the Wilder Foundation (another operating foundation), in addition to providing the program with flexible funds, has assumed an array of such critical roles as carrying out many of the administrative responsibilities of a project director for one and a half years; providing various employment-related activities as a vendor; providing access to its management information system (MIS); offering a range of technical assistance on such matters as meeting facilitation and community-building; and employing several Jobs-Plus staff on its payroll, using monies channeled to it from the housing authority and other funding sources.

A Diverse Array of Nonprofit Service Providers

All the collaboratives recruited nonprofit service providers as partners because of their expertise in addressing employment barriers (such as child care, substance abuse, domestic violence, physical and mental health problems, and legal problems) and in dealing with such issues as money management and budgeting, once residents begin working. Some nonprofit organizations supply services on-site or off-site as program vendors, and their services reflect differences among sites in the characteristics and employment barriers that the local programs must address. For example, in Baltimore, where drug use is particularly widespread, a key vendor for Jobs-Plus is the Vision for Health Consortium (VHC), which provides on-site health screenings and referrals such as for drug treatment. Imperial Courts Jobs-Plus — one of two sites in Los Angeles — added a credit union to help residents address financial problems, prepare their taxes, and access loans to take training courses. Seattle Jobs-Plus recruited ethnic agencies like the Refugee Women's Alliance as collaborative members and vendors to address the needs of the program's many Southeast Asian and East African refugees at Rainier Vista.[13]

Technical Assistance Partners

Recognizing from the start that the kinds of partnerships and program envisioned for Jobs-Plus would not just happen — and would not happen quickly — the demonstration's designers looked to and funded MDRC to help the sites build their collaboratives and design

[13]Faith-based associations are members of several collaboratives, primarily in the capacity of service providers. In Baltimore, for example, New Song Ministries sponsors a variety of self-sufficiency, housing, and cultural activities to residents of the Sandtown-Winchester community. It currently provides job placement and follow-up services for many Job-Plus participants. The Chattanooga Jobs-Plus collaborative has included an African-American religious organization, Inner-City Ministries, which operates job readiness, social services, recreational, and other programs in a nearby facility.

and implement their programs.[14] Initially, most of MDRC's direct technical assistance was done by operations staff from its New York or San Francisco office, with one such staff member being assigned to each locality on a part-time basis. These people visited their assigned sites regularly (usually for a few days at a time each month) to attend planning meetings, offer direction and feedback, and monitor the sites' progress. This centralized strategy was later changed in five of the seven sites in favor of hiring local consultants to play this role, working under the supervision of an MDRC staff person who was in charge of the demonstration's technical assistance effort. In the other two sites, the New York-based operations staff increased the frequency of their visits to the sites. These changes were intended to allow the operations staff to function much more as partners — or technical assistance "coaches"[15] — to their sites. More recently, as the sites matured and staff turnover left some of these positions vacant, central MDRC staff again took on this role.[16] In several cities, the site representatives became, in effect, ex officio members of the collaboratives, working particularly closely with the project directors.

The collaboratives have also worked with a variety of other national and local technical assistance providers, as will be seen in later chapters, but for time-limited and more specific purposes. Also important was the role of The Rockefeller Foundation, one of the demonstration's main sponsors. Foundation staff have helped plan aspects of the technical assistance strategy and have supported cross-site technical assistance conferences, sometimes jointly with HUD and other national funders.

Conclusion

The Jobs-Plus collaboratives in six of the demonstration's seven original cities are still active four years after the start of the project. They have survived numerous challenges and setbacks and are likely to endure for some years to come. If the productivity of the collabora-

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[14]The literature on comprehensive community initiatives (CCI) underscores the importance of providing technical assistance to facilitate the relationship-building process as well as to help collaborative bodies with the technical details of project implementation, and a number of studies draw lessons about effective ways to provide technical assistance (see, for example, Aspen Institute, 1997; Brown, Pitt, and Hirota, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997).

[15]For a discussion of the coach role in the provision of technical assistance to comprehensive community initiatives, see Brown, Pitt, and Hirota, 1999.

[16]There are trade-offs between using local staff versus central staff. One advantage of local staff is that they are able to attend more collaborative meetings and can work more continuously and intensively with site staff between those meetings, and they are better positioned to help craft responses to innumerable day-to-day issues. This arrangement is also thought to be a more effective way of transferring skills and building local capacity — by "doing," not just reviewing and commenting. Local staff may also have a better understanding of the local political, institutional, and economic context and may be connected to social networks of service providers, agencies, and funders that might be tapped and used to the advantage of the Jobs-Plus program. Central staff, however, may make it easier to provide consistent guidance across sites. MDRC is reviewing these and other implications of various approaches to the operations role in Jobs-Plus and a companion project, the Neighborhood Jobs Initiative (see Molina and Nelson, 2001).

tives can be judged in terms of getting a fully operational, three-component, saturation-level intervention designed and in place, and in terms of serving large numbers of residents, then it is fair to say the collaboratives were substantially but not completely successful by the fall of 2000. While all have come a long way, the pace of their overall progress has been much slower than hoped. Moreover, in Chattanooga and Los Angeles, programs that had been operating for a while subsequently fell into disarray and had to be rebuilt. So far, the collaboratives have a mixed record in creating a jointly funded, collectively "owned" program — a key principle of collaboration set by the demonstration's designers. The housing authorities have made the largest material investments in Jobs-Plus, substantially exceeding those of the other agencies, and their investments have also been the most flexible. However, their cash contributions have depended on "soft money" (such as from HUD's ED/SS grants) that is not continuously available, and this has left Jobs-Plus vulnerable to disruptive funding shortfalls — a situation that the demonstrations' designers had hoped to avoid through a collaborative approach. Indeed, the fact that most of the programs were not able to secure ED/SS grants early on contributed to their slow start-up. Nor will the programs all win renewals of those grants. The programs in Los Angeles have not. However, Jobs-Plus is still in a demonstration phase. It might be easier to secure a broader funding base from the collaborating partners if the evaluation of the program shows that Jobs-Plus has lived up to its promise of producing the large gains in employment, earnings, and quality of life that it was intended to achieve.

Difficulties in securing stable funding and implementing a mature, well-functioning program have arisen from a variety of factors over which the collaboratives did not have complete control. To an important extent, however, these problems can be traced to collaborative governance and management problems, which are discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Governance, Networking, and Accountability

Introduction

Over the course of the Jobs-Plus demonstration, local decisionmakers would have to make both strategic and day-to-day operational decisions. Strategic decisions related to setting the program's overall direction and priorities and specifying the general content of its three main components (employment-related services, financial work incentives, and community support for work); selecting the program's main leaders (in particular, the project director); and making critical funding choices. Operational decisions pertained to such matters as defining and filling other staff positions in the program and determining how the vision of each Jobs-Plus component would be carried out on the ground.

In keeping with the principle of inclusive decisionmaking, the national designers wanted strategic and operational decisions to reflect the ideas and preferences of the range of local stakeholders, not just those of a single agency. In particular, Jobs-Plus was not to be a program of the housing authority alone. For this to happen, however, the partners needed venues and processes for contributing their ideas and making decisions collectively, fairly, and in a relatively timely manner. The national designers did not give the sites any template for doing this, leaving the task instead to the local partners themselves. How, then, did the collaboratives try to meet this challenge, and what were the results?

The collaboratives pursued a variety of governance strategies, including attempts at shared decisionmaking but also a reliance on a range of other opportunities for members to influence the program, such as informal networking or employment as Jobs-Plus staff. This chapter examines these strategies, describing what was tried and assessing how well each approach worked in fostering inclusive decisionmaking and programmatic accomplishments.

Ultimately, the collaboratives would be judged by their success in getting Jobs-Plus programs on-line and in meeting their employment goals in a timely manner. Therefore, the chapter also looks at the issue of accountability, examining the role of the collaborative partners in holding the Jobs-Plus staff accountable for the program's performance — and in holding each other accountable for resource commitments and performance as a service provider.

Formal Governance as a Starting Point for Partner Involvement

Across public policy domains, collaboratives often set up formal governance structures and procedures through which their members can participate in shaping and guiding their joint initiative. In this context, when such partners take on a *governance role*, they assume responsibility for making authoritative decisions that are binding on the program, with the expectation that the program will comply. This can be distinguished from an *advisory role*, in which

the partners offer information or recommendations for consideration by those who have decisionmaking authority.

Early on in the Jobs-Plus demonstration, all the collaboratives wanted to share governance responsibilities broadly among the partners as a way to engage all of them as fully and fairly as possible in designing and implementing the program. This meant that the collaboratives would have to create formal and/or informal mechanisms through which such engagement could occur. *Formal mechanisms* could include official roles, rules, and procedures of governance, perhaps codified in bylaws, that would set forth such guidelines as the frequency and purposes of meetings among the collaborative's delegates, special committee structures and decisionmaking roles, an explicit allocation of authority across those committees and roles, and mechanisms for soliciting feedback from the larger resident population. *Informal venues and processes* could take the form of any variety of ad hoc communications and consultations among the partners themselves, and between the partners and the program staff. As will be seen, the collaboratives put in place a combination of formal and informal mechanisms.

Formal structures and procedures, in particular, were given high priority because the partners implicitly recognized — as many experts on public administrative reform and participatory democracy emphasize — that formal mechanisms can increase the likelihood of inclusive, democratic decisionmaking. They may be especially important when the members of a decisionmaking body are highly unequal in status and when sizable resources are at stake. By providing all the parties with the same opportunities to express their views, and by placing them all under the same explicit procedural rules, formal structures may help to ensure that the deliberations are conducted "in the open" by all, instead of "behind the scenes" by the most influential members. Formal governance ensures that all parties are accountable for the group's decisions.[1]

In Jobs-Plus, these potential advantages of formal governance were considered particularly important with regard to resident involvement. Formal structures, it was hoped, would provide opportunities for "voice" and leverage to residents, who typically lacked access to the professional networks and informal exchanges through which the partner agencies routinely conducted business. Through these structures, resident representatives (usually leaders or appointees of the resident advisory council of a housing development) would have the same right to speak and vote as any other collaborative delegate.

Alternative Approaches

At first, most of the collaboratives attempted to create formal governance structures that involved the *full collaborative*. Accordingly, all the partners were invited to attend regularly scheduled collaborative meetings to make decisions about the design and implementation of Jobs-Plus. Moreover, in keeping with the ideal of inclusiveness, a clear preference emerged everywhere in favor of "consensus decisionmaking" rather than formal voting and majority

[1]Bardach, 1998; Fung, 1998, 2000.

rule.[2] A consensus approach underscored the intent to have Jobs-Plus reflect a common vision among the partners, as much as possible.

But involving a large group in the process of governance proved too cumbersome for making decisions. A key partner of Baltimore Jobs-Plus said: "[W]ith so many people trying to make decisions, it creates bottlenecks." Group decisionmaking was also widely seen as imposing too great a burden on too many partners, especially during the initial planning stages of the demonstration, which lasted for many months. Indeed, in several sites, the fear of "burnout" among the partners became a serious worry.

Sensitive to these issues, the collaboratives in Dayton and Chattanooga took a different approach to shared governance by establishing a smaller *steering committee* and *governance board*, respectively, for making key program decisions, such as selecting the project director, setting annual goals and policies, and approving the program's budget. These representative bodies met regularly and only sought the input of the full collaborative on proposals concerning specific issues or the general direction of the program. St. Paul Jobs-Plus continued to rely on its full set of partners, called the "Key Collaborators," but this was a small group from the outset.[3]

In Los Angeles, where Jobs-Plus programs were established in two separate housing developments, the programs adopted a *multi-tiered structure*. In addition to a full collaborative (and, later, a smaller executive committee) responsible for both programs, separate collaboratives were set up for Imperial Courts and William Mead Homes, each with their own representatives from nonprofit service providers, public agencies, and the resident council. This was done to address better the substantial differences between the racial and ethnic backgrounds, employment barriers, and local circumstances and job opportunities of the residents of the two developments. These development-level collaboratives tend to work more directly with the site coordinator of the program than with the project director.[4]

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[2]For example, a protocol endorsed at a meeting of the Seattle Jobs-Plus collaborative says: "Collaborative decisions will be made by consensus to the greatest extent possible. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, a decision will be made by majority vote." As it turned out, formal voting was rare everywhere. If a proposed action or decision was put before the partners for their approval, and if some of them voiced strong opposition, the issue would often be debated until consensus was reached or until the opposing voices submitted to the will of the group. Alternatively, a decision would be deferred. One thorny issue that made voting a difficult option was the following: If agencies were represented by more than one individual (for example, if several representatives came to a meeting from the welfare agency, the housing authority, or the resident council), would each individual have a vote, or would each organization have only one vote?

[3]See Swanson, 1999, for additional information on the early experiences of St. Paul's collaborative.

[4]Since Los Angeles has two Jobs-Plus programs, each program has a site coordinator who is comparable to the project directors of the other programs and functions as the on-site administrator in charge of program operations and staff supervision. The project director in Los Angeles supervises the site coordinators and is responsible for securing funding and staff for the two programs and also serves as a liaison for Jobs-Plus within the housing authority's "downtown" central offices, where she is located.

The collaboratives across the sites also set up *special committees or task groups* that were given the responsibilities for designing the main components of Jobs-Plus; for spearheading such efforts as program funding, resident recruitment, and special celebrations; and, after program implementation, for identifying emerging service needs and local providers to address them. It was generally expected that committee recommendations would be brought to the full collaborative or executive committee for approval.

In several sites, the commitment to resident involvement led the collaborative partners to take additional steps early on in designing their governance structures to ensure that the residents had as much, if not more, opportunity as the partner agencies to shape Jobs-Plus in the formal proceedings. For example, Dayton's collaborative called for each subcommittee to be co-chaired by a resident along with another partner. In Los Angeles, residents were initially assigned the responsibility of chairing the meetings of each of that site's development-level collaboratives. The Chattanooga partners went furthest, however, by having residents assume the chair and the majority of positions on that site's Governance Board (6 of the board's 11 seats). This was intended to give residents as a group more voting strength than the institutional partners, thus ensuring a "resident-driven" program.

Across the sites, the approach to governance has changed over time. As later sections of this chapter discuss, more decisionmaking responsibilities shifted from the collaborative to the project director and program staff in most sites for charting future directions and for making continuing refinements in the program's design, staffing, and rules as Jobs-Plus implementation got under way and a full complement of staff was hired. Informal venues and processes also took on greater importance as ways of involving partners in decisionmaking for Jobs-Plus. In Chattanooga, Dayton, and St. Paul, the Governance Board, Steering Committee, and Key Collaborators, respectively, continue to operate as decisionmaking bodies, with such responsibilities as approving key staff appointments, developing policy, and overseeing performance. In the other sites, however, the collaboratives function predominantly as advisory bodies without governance responsibilities.

Variations in the Performance of Formal Governance

How well did these formal governance structures work? Did they effectively involve the collaborative partners in putting a program on-line in a timely manner and helping it to achieve its employment goals? In other words, did formal structures function in ways that were both inclusive and productive?

The record is mixed. Formal governance responsibilities and structures did help to engage an array of voices, including those from the resident community, in setting Jobs-Plus's direction and features. Subsequent chapters illustrate that the various Jobs-Plus programs clearly bear the stamp of these voices. Such inclusiveness conveyed legitimacy to collaborative decisions, which was particularly important in gaining residents' support for the program. In addition, as other chapters will show, much has been accomplished programmatically across the sites. A number of local partners have invested significant resources in the program and have made a variety of institutional adaptations to deliver Jobs-Plus services. And many residents are participating in job preparation activities, getting placed into jobs,

and receiving financial incentives. However, this type of progress was not always achieved *because* the formal governance mechanisms worked well but *despite* the fact that they often worked poorly. In addition, in most sites, the program remains rather fragile after roughly four years of operations.

To some extent, the slow progress in building a fully functioning and stable Jobs-Plus program was an outcome of the kind of "product-process tension" that arises when the "process" of making decisions with a broad array of partners, and of building the collaborative's capacity to engage in participatory decisionmaking, diverts time and resources away from the "products" that the collaborative is supposed to generate.[5] For example, for nearly the first two years of the demonstration, the partners across Jobs-Plus sites complained about the slow pace of getting a program on-line and running well, in part as a result of relying on too broad a number of partners to make decisions about program design and implementation. After what seemed like endless months of planning, many partners said that they were attending too many meetings with too little to show for it. As a housing authority representative in Baltimore said about her colleagues on the collaborative:

> After a while, they are like "Okay, we planned for a year and a half now. What's going to happen?" And people did get a little frustrated. Interest started to die down [as people wondered whether Jobs-Plus] was actually going to happen because it was taking so long to get it off the ground.

It must be noted that sometimes circumstances beyond the control of the collaboratives impeded implementation progress. For example, long delays in getting approval from HUD and other federal entities for Jobs-Plus's financial incentives severely undermined the efforts of the collaboratives to get this crucial program component in place quickly. Several sites also had to struggle, as many small programs do, with major disruptions caused by staff turnover.

Still, formal governance worked better in some sites — and at some times — than others in engaging partners both inclusively and productively in decisionmaking for Jobs-Plus. Factors that contributed to how well formal structures functioned include the housing authority's willingness to share governance authority with the collaborative, the partner agencies' willingness to provide senior-level representation and support, and the project director's capacity to manage the formal governance process effectively and turn decisions into action.

The Housing Authority's Willingness to Share Governance Authority

To exercise a formal governance role, each collaborative needed the power and jurisdiction to make critical decisions for Jobs-Plus. But the housing authority was in a strong position to draw the lines between the issues over which it retained exclusive jurisdiction and those it was willing to concede to the collaborative to decide. As indicated in Chapter 2, among the partner agencies, the housing authority had the strongest interest in the outcome

[5]Aspen Institute, 1997. See also Ferguson's (1999) discussion of the tension between "industriousness versus discouragement" in community alliances.

of Jobs-Plus, since it had the most resources invested in it. And as Chapter 5 discusses at length, it had exclusive jurisdiction over many matters that critically affected the program. For example, since the housing authority was the fiduciary agent for funds allocated to the program, most of the Jobs-Plus staff were on the housing authority's payroll and were subject to the agency's personnel and procurement rules. As the project director of Baltimore Jobs-Plus emphasized:

> With the housing authority as lead agency controlling the funding and staffing and flow of the program, they became the owner. I don't see the collaborative taking the program away from the housing authority, and I don't see the residents doing this either.

Housing authority officials varied across sites in their willingness to involve collaborative partners in staffing matters. This was important because it sent a strong message about the value the agency placed on the principle of inclusive decisionmaking in general. It may have also signaled to the project director how hard he or she should work to promote inclusiveness. As one example, the executive director of the housing authority in Los Angeles unilaterally replaced the Jobs-Plus project director several times. When some partner agencies complained after one such replacement, the executive director explained his decision but emphasized that he was not asking the partners to ratify it; he insisted that hiring decisions resided with the housing authority alone, since it paid the salaries.[6] In contrast, the collaborative partners on the steering committees in Chattanooga, Dayton, and St. Paul participated in the entire process of hiring the project director, from designing the job description to selecting the candidate. But even when housing authority officials were willing to share hiring decisions, they sometimes had to be reminded to do so. In Dayton, for example, the executive director removed the first project director, and the Steering Committee vigorously objected to their not being consulted, stating that this violated the principle of shared decisionmaking and undermined the committee's authority. Perhaps in part because this committee included senior-level representatives of the other partner agencies, the executive director promised to work more closely with them in the future in making such important decisions.

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[6]The housing authority's executive director in Los Angeles maintains considerable control over the agency's administration, so that Jobs-Plus is very much contingent on his support. And Jobs-Plus staff — nearly all of whom are housing authority employees — cannot turn to the institutional partners for leverage, since the collaborative has a relatively minor, operational role in this project and since the housing authority has had limited need (until recently) for the resources and expertise of other agencies to provide employment services, because of its extensive internal resources. For over a decade, the Los Angeles housing authority has been operating Community Service Centers (CSCs) that offer extensive employment services in a number of its housing developments, and, more recently, it has acquired a $5 million federal Welfare-to-Work grant to expand the CSCs. Moreover, it has relied on opportunities to "budget and buy" employment services internally for the centers from within the agency's own divisions, rather than drawing on service partnerships with outside agencies, as many housing authorities do at other sites. Some observers have gone as far as to say that this housing authority's ability to claim ownership of Jobs-Plus was critical to its continued support for the project.

Typically, senior-level housing authority officials felt more beholden to the residents as their tenants and constituents than to their partner agencies on the collaboratives. Resident leaders thus derived some measure of power from their preferential access to housing authority officials. For example, the executive director in Los Angeles, like his counterparts elsewhere, invariably conferred with resident leaders on any staffing matters concerning their developments, in order to maintain peaceful, cooperative relationships with them. Consequently, residents were appointed to hiring committees for the project director and site coordinators for Jobs-Plus, even though representatives from partner agencies were not consulted. The project director of Baltimore Jobs-Plus said: "If I did something that was totally against the way [the resident leaders] want it, it wouldn't work. They know who to call" in the housing authority hierarchy.

At the same time, it is important to emphasize that partnership in a collaborative governance arrangement represented for residents a departure from their historical dependence on senior housing authority officials to address their concerns. However, with the dominance of the housing authority over Jobs-Plus and the shift of the collaborative from a governance role to an advisory one, the possibilities of residents' exerting *formal* authority over Jobs-Plus services in their communities were significantly diminished.

Senior-Level Representation and Support Among Non-Housing Authority Partner Agencies

To exercise a formal governance role over Jobs-Plus, the non-housing authority collaborative partners had to have the desire and will to do so, particularly when the housing authority was reluctant to share decisionmaking. But most of the partner agencies across the sites were not interested in such an encompassing role, viewing Jobs-Plus as primarily a housing authority initiative for which they should not bear overall responsibility.[7] Although there were important exceptions, most partners were interested in simply helping Jobs-Plus in ways that drew on their specific expertise and resources, only seeking to influence those aspects of the program that affected their ability to provide services effectively. According to an institutional representative in Baltimore, the demands of their own jobs made it difficult for professional staff from the collaborating agencies to involve themselves very deeply in a broad governance role for Jobs-Plus: "Everyone is more worried about their own shop. Everyone has too much to do."

Many of the non-housing authority partner agencies had only a small stake in the overall success of Jobs-Plus. Consequently, neither the agencies nor the personal career standing within those agencies of their representatives on the Jobs-Plus collaboratives would be significantly affected if the enterprise failed. As shown in Chapter 2, the financial investments

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[7]Gray (1985) contends: "The recognition by stakeholder groups that their actions are inextricably linked to the actions of other stakeholders is a critical basis for collaboration. Perceptions of positive benefits can be increased when stakeholders come to appreciate the extent of their interdependence on each other" (p. 921). In Jobs-Plus, despite the recognition by many that the participating agencies' policy goals were increasingly aligned in recent years, perceptions of such a high degree of interdependence were rare.

that agencies other than the housing authority made in the program were generally rather small and of an in-kind nature. Furthermore, Jobs-Plus was typically competing with other policy initiatives and priorities that had a higher profile on the local political scene and a more prominent place on the program dockets of the partner agencies, particularly in the larger cities. For example, Baltimore was awash in social policy initiatives and program experiments that dwarfed Jobs-Plus, since national foundations and federal agencies routinely use the city's proximity to Washington, DC, to showcase programs to federal lawmakers.[8] And during the same period that Jobs-Plus was being launched, higher-level staff members of the mandatory agencies across the sites were typically preoccupied with implementing major welfare reforms and overhauling the workforce development system.[9]

This also meant that the non-housing authority partner agencies increasingly sent midlevel managers, instead of senior officials, as representatives to the collaboratives.[10] The exceptions were the collaboratives in Chattanooga and Dayton, where committed senior-level representatives were core members of the Governance Board and of the Steering Committee, respectively. But Jobs-Plus needed senior-level representatives at the collaborative table and support within their agencies. Unlike midlevel managers and frontline staff, senior-level administrators have the authority to cut through bureaucratic red tape to approve personnel, resources, and procedural changes as needs arise. A collaborative member of Baltimore Jobs-Plus commented: "The person at the table needs to be able to go back to agency leaders to press for other ways to support and help the program. Some people there may not have been able to do this." Similarly, the project director at that site complained that the midlevel representatives were not giving senior policymakers the information they needed in order to implement the necessary policy changes in their agencies that would support Jobs-Plus. It should also be noted that, without sustained senior-level agency support for the demonstration, particularly among the mandatory partners — and given an array of competing local policy demands — Jobs-Plus was unable to be the catalyst for systemic change in the local

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[8]In Baltimore's Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood, for example, Jobs-Plus was dwarfed by the huge investments made by the Kellogg Foundation and the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation in comprehensive health care initiatives. Some agencies, including the Mayor's Office, that eventually became members of the Jobs-Plus collaborative in Baltimore had initially objected to Jobs-Plus because it would be one more initiative directed at the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood, even though there were many other impoverished areas in this city.

[9]As a demonstration program at a single development in a locality, Jobs-Plus had the immediate potential to reach only the few hundred TANF recipients among its clientele in the development. This meant that Jobs-Plus was often regarded as a relatively insignificant program by the local welfare department — for example, in Los Angeles, where the agency was trying to place 140,000 TANF recipients into jobs.

[10]In many of the collaboratives, higher-level staff were more likely to be involved in the very early planning stages, when visions of the program were being articulated. From the perspective of a city agency representative in Baltimore, this was reasonable: "As this activity moved from conceptualization to design and now heavily to implementation, then it makes sense that you would move from the policy makers to the folks who are on the ground who can make sure that it happens in the agency or within the community."

workforce development and social service systems that the national funders had hoped it might be.

The Project Director's Capacity to Manage the Formal Governance Process

To exercise a formal governance role over Jobs-Plus, the collaboratives also needed a management structure for ensuring that the partners were convened regularly, that the proceedings were inclusive, and that collaborative decisions were actually implemented. The project directors ended up assuming these responsibilities. To an important extent, the substantial variation across sites (and over time, at some sites) in the performance of the collaboratives as governing bodies can be explained by the relative success of the project directors in carrying out these responsibilities.

Once the programs were staffed and implemented, the collaborative partners tacitly, if not explicitly, turned over to the project directors the responsibility for formally convening them. Convening meetings was particularly burdensome because doing it well required careful preparation of agendas, background materials, and project reports. Considerable work thus had to be done *between* meetings if the time spent *at* the meetings was to be used effectively. These preparations often took a backseat to the project directors' other responsibilities in managing the program's day-to-day operations and ongoing development. In fact, the day-to-day work was usually so demanding that the project directors often relied heavily on the assistance of MDRC site representatives in preparing for collaborative meetings.[11]

In some cases, the convening of the partners for collaborative meetings broke down in the absence of leadership from the project director. For example, in Los Angeles (the most extreme case), high turnover in the project director's position resulted at one point in the effective collapse of the collaborative; no meetings of the full group of partners were called for over a year, and meetings of the two development-based collaboratives were held irregularly. However, under the leadership of a new project director who was committed to collaborative participation in Jobs-Plus, and with support from MDRC, the executive committee and the development-based collaboratives were reconstituted, and regular meetings were reestablished. And in Chattanooga Jobs-Plus, the formal governing process of one of the better-functioning and most committed collaboratives almost unraveled midstream when the project director stopped convening the partners regularly and stopped following through on their proposals to address the program's flagging performance.

The project directors also played a critical role in ensuring that collaborative members were involved — and heard — in collaborative proceedings. This was particularly important

[11] As noted in Chapter 2, a site representative was assigned to a program on a part-time basis and was expected to function as a kind of "coach" for program development. But in some locations the site representative often had to assume substantial direct administrative responsibilities because of the pressing challenges that the project director faced. Indeed, the assistance of the site representatives has had to be prolonged well beyond the originally conceived time frame because of the continuing capacity-building and implementation needs of the programs. A forthcoming MDRC report will discuss the role of the site representatives and the technical assistance they provided to the Jobs-Plus programs.

for including residents' voices in developing services that they would then support and use. The project directors often directly solicited residents' ideas and concerns in preparing agendas for collaborative and committee meetings. This sometimes required a project director to attend resident council meetings beforehand and to canvass the housing development on foot to talk with residents and get an array of opinions. It also fell mostly to the project directors to make sure that resident representatives "got the floor" during collaborative discussions — and were heeded by the partner agencies. An observer said about the project director of Seattle Jobs-Plus: "Residents are equal partners in Seattle, even more than residents realize. It's well internalized among the collaborative partners that you don't move without checking with residents. [The project director] helps enforce this."

The challenge of ensuring that residents would have an impact on the collaboratives' deliberations required more than simply ensuring an opportunity to speak. Delegates' effectiveness was sometimes stymied by differences in the "communicative cultures"[12] of the residents and the agency delegates — that is, differences in how they expressed their views to one another. The technical knowledge, language, professional norms, informal networks, and agency priorities that affected how agency representatives conducted business often presented a formidable barrier to the resident delegates. The agency representatives have generally approached business meetings as rational exercises in which proposals and reasons to support them would be presented as pithily as possible, with an expectation that each individual's speaking time would be limited to ensure efficiency and fairness. In contrast, a number of resident spokespersons have relied on lengthy personal narratives — stories and testimonials — to make their points, and they have sometimes taken offense at attempts of moderators to cut them off midstream. Agency representatives in some sites complained about the inefficient use of their time and called for residents to receive "formal training in how to hold meetings," such as training on the use of Roberts' Rules of Order. In some sites, cultural differences based on race or ethnicity exacerbated these communication problems (see Chapter 6). To an important extent, it fell to the project director as manager of the governance process to try to help all the partners bridge this divide. But this problem was not an easy one to solve. Indeed, various partners have suggested in retrospect that collaborative meetings would be more fruitful if technical assistance were given to agency and resident delegates alike concerning strategies for effective, culturally sensitive discourse and if the project director and other meeting facilitators were better trained on how to address such issues.

Finally, the project directors were responsible for ensuring that collaborative concerns and decisions were addressed and enacted. The absence of such follow-up at some sites was a common complaint and was often cited as one of the most important reasons for a collaborative's poor productivity or flagging interest. For example, in commenting on Cleveland's slow progress in program implementation, a representative on the collaborative said that the project director had never pursued the agency's repeated offers to assist Jobs-Plus with employment opportunities — even as a source of jobs for residents. And even the highly com-

[12]Briggs, 1998.

mitted Key Collaborators in St. Paul had considerable trouble getting decisions made and implemented, partly because they relied on a "shared leadership" governance approach that lacked a project director. A number of partners contended that this arrangement caused issues to be brought back to the group repeatedly for review, instead of being addressed in a timely way. The residents complained that their proposals were too often "put in the parking lot" after discussion and were not pursued, because no one had the responsibility to do so. The partners, particularly the residents, successfully pressed for the hiring of a "program manager," who was selected by the collaborative in summer 2000.

Rethinking Formal Governance

Research on organizational networks suggests that the success of agency representatives in reaching agreement and taking collective action depends heavily on (1) the dispositions of the delegates and the incentives they receive to cooperate, (2) the existence of leadership that can maintain delegates' commitment and cooperation, and (3) the involvement of a limited number and variety of partners.[13] As this chapter has discussed so far, these conditions generally did not hold across most of the Jobs-Plus sites, which may help to explain why it was so difficult to involve all partners in collective decisionmaking through formal mechanisms of governance.

The many problems in getting decisions made in a timely manner led the collaboratives to rethink their approaches to governance. None of the Jobs-Plus programs currently attempts to use, or makes any pretense of using, the full collaborative as a decisionmaking body that has any authority over the program. Instead, formal meetings of the collaboratives draw on the partners in an advisory capacity. Indeed, the project director of Baltimore Jobs-Plus said that the program would not be well served by having a broad group of partners continue to play the governance role it had during an earlier period: "It would be too confining if too many people were making decisions, and the group would become too fractured. It's better to have them as an advisory group and a supportive group." While the partners across the sites are still consulted and engage in joint planning efforts, this is done primarily through informal arrangements and bilateral negotiations as needs arise. This approach depends critically on the initiative of the project director.

On the other hand, the collaboratives in Chattanooga, Dayton, and St. Paul have retained some kind of governance role for their Governance Board, Steering Committee, and Key Collaborators, respectively. In these cities, senior-level officials from the housing authority and other key agencies are highly committed to Jobs-Plus and want to have a role in steering it. These governance committees therefore still exercise some authority — for instance, in approving key staff appointments, setting overall policy, developing services, and/or monitoring program performance.

Having an authoritative voice over these critical programmatic concerns may, in turn, reinforce the sense of obligation that the partner agencies and their representatives have for Jobs-Plus. As a consequence, these agencies may be more likely to continue to respond to the

[13]See, for example, Bardach, 1998; Faerman, McCaffrey, and Van Slyke, 1999.

program's needs. For example, the partner agencies in Dayton have supported extensive program experimentation, and the partners in Chattanooga have helped to revitalize the entire Jobs-Plus program when it was on the brink of collapse. In contrast, programs in most other sites have had to rely heavily on the project director to take the lead in trying to sustain multi-agency support for Jobs-Plus.

Beyond Governance: Other Ways to Influence Jobs-Plus

Public administrative reform experts emphasize that formal governance is not the only way — nor necessarily the best way — to involve partners in developing and guiding collaborative ventures.[14] Indeed, across Jobs-Plus sites, a number of delegates exert influence in ways other than as participants in formal governance, such as by participating in collaborative meetings, which are now used primarily as opportunities for interagency networking and information-sharing; by having staff of their agencies serve as on-site Jobs-Plus staff; and through informal interactions with the project director. By involving the partners through these venues, the collaboratives capitalized on the willingness of the partners to help Jobs-Plus in ways that drew on their specific expertise, even if they did not want a governance role.[15] Furthermore, these venues permit the partners to contribute in a variety of useful ways and allow the program to exploit interagency networks and individual contacts on an ad hoc basis as needs emerge, which could help Jobs-Plus in its efforts to be flexible and responsive in delivering services.

Using Collaborative Meetings as Networking Opportunities

Formal meetings of the full collaboratives were used across Jobs-Plus sites as networking opportunities to update the partners on the status and progress of the programs and to solicit their advice about and resources for emerging program needs. Jobs-Plus staff were usually present at collaborative meetings and conferred with the agency representatives about their work with Jobs-Plus participants. They looked to the representatives for valuable "insider knowledge" about the agencies' services, shifts in funding opportunities and regulations, and the staff persons to contact for assistance on various matters.

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[14]For example, Bardach (1998) writes: "*Governing* is not the only way of doing *steering*, and for many purposes it is surely not the best way. . . . [S]etting up and running a constitutional order can entail high costs in time and energy. Time spent debating who is entitled to how many seats on what sort of a board that will have exactly what sort of powers is time that might otherwise have been spent on raising resources, improving the operating subsystem, or doing productive work at the line level" (p. 211).

[15]For example, it was rare for non-housing authority agency delegates to take an active involvement in the formulation of the program's financial incentives, which they felt were outside their range of expertise and over which they could not play any significant delivery role. In contrast, they were primarily focused on how they would work together with the housing authority and other agencies in delivering employment and training services or important support services (for example, child care and substance abuse treatment).

In Baltimore, for example, a Jobs-Plus staff member emphasized that attending collaborative meetings helped him form firsthand relationships with staff from the welfare department and other agencies whom he could "call to cut through the red tape" in getting services and resources for Jobs-Plus participants. At one meeting of the collaborative, a welfare agency representative, after hearing a progress report on the status of the program, told the Jobs-Plus staff: "Whatever you need, let me know. I'll help you." A Jobs-Plus staff member responded: "We want to learn more about how DSS [Department of Social Services] can help with TANF recipients getting a clear path." This prompted a general discussion about the growing importance of addressing the career advancement of residents, now that many of them had been placed into jobs. A partner who represented the Office of Employment Development (OED) suggested that skills assessment and career counseling services at a nearby OED center might be helpful in this regard. In addition, she identified a particular staff person who was especially successful in helping clients prepare voucher applications so that they could get through OED's complex application process the first time around. This "insider" offered valuable information that Jobs-Plus staff could use in getting residents access to needed services.

Involving Partners as Jobs-Plus Staff

A number of collaborative partners had opportunities to influence Jobs-Plus at the operational level through the work of their on-site staff, who were assigned to the program and outstationed at the Jobs-Plus developments on a part-time or full-time basis. These staff introduced into the program their agencies' expertise, practices, and norms in delivering services as job developers, case managers, education instructors, and so on, and in their day-to-day interactions with Jobs-Plus staff. For example, staff from community-based service providers (like Baltimore's Vision for Health Consortium or Seattle's Refugee Women's Alliance) encouraged Jobs-Plus staff to reach out to "hard-to-employ" residents or ethnic groups in the developments by using — in addition to standard social work practices — culturally sensitive, informal service approaches, including "hanging out" wherever such residents were likely to be, instead of staying in the Jobs-Plus offices. At some sites, outstationed agency staff also attended formal collaborative meetings. For example, in St. Paul, staff who were assigned to Jobs-Plus by the St. Paul Public Schools and the Wilder Foundation also represented their agencies at meetings of the Key Collaborators.

Residents, too, had valuable opportunities as Jobs-Plus staff to improve how the program addressed their service needs. As outreach workers, intake workers, case management specialists, and receptionists, the residents acquired valuable hands-on experience with the ways in which agencies deliver services to their community. As Chapter 6 discusses, this "insider knowledge" equipped residents to propose program improvements to both the professional staff and their collaborative partners. Indeed, resident staff came to exercise considerable influence on the collaboratives, since they usually had firsthand knowledge about the

status of program operations and could offer a "resident perspective" that collaborative partners did not have.[16]

Informal Dialogue Between the Project Director and Agency Representatives

A project director's readiness and skillfulness in cultivating opportunities for *informal dialogue* with partner agencies has also been critical for keeping the partners engaged — and for getting their honest, helpful, and timely input as well as agency accommodations for emerging program needs. Informal dialogue was particularly important once program implementation got under way, since project directors and collaborative partners interacted mostly through direct, bilateral exchanges outside the context of formal collaborative or committee meetings. For example, the project director of Seattle Jobs-Plus has been described as a kind of "hub in a wheel" through whom much of the communication within the collaborative flowed. When an issue emerged calling for attention, he would contact the partners individually to discuss the matter and solicit their opinions and advice. In this way, he was able to use the partners as advisors and also keep them involved in the program without waiting for the next quarterly meeting of the collaborative. According to an observer, the project director's "style of engaging residents and insisting on consensus building with other partners makes the housing authority seem less dominating than might otherwise appear."

The project directors often turned to the partner agencies as a network of available experts to work on an ad hoc basis with the program staff in addressing specific needs or problems. For example, the Enterprise Foundation helped the Baltimore Jobs-Plus staff prepare a proposal for a child care grant, and the Community Foundation designed a job preparation curriculum for Chattanooga Jobs-Plus. Similarly, the program staff at Dayton Jobs-Plus have been turning to members of a collaborative committee on mental health for help in working with "hard-to-employ" residents who are struggling with drug addiction and depression in their efforts to retain jobs.

It must be emphasized, however, that relying primarily on the informal outreach and support of the project director to involve the partners in Jobs-Plus also risked undercutting the collaborative's influence. It allowed for behind-the-scenes decisionmaking in which the project director could decide matters unilaterally or with only a few favored partners, cutting out the others. For residents, informal interactions also threatened to perpetuate their traditional pattern of dependence on the patronage of housing authority officials, which their membership as partners in a formal collaborative governance structure for Jobs-Plus was intended to replace. It was therefore a continuing leadership challenge to involve the collaborative adequately and usefully in the program by maintaining an appropriate balance be-

[16] In discussing the role of residents in community revitalization initiatives, Sviridoff and Ryan (1996) distinguish between "resident as policy maker" (for example, as a member of a collaborative governing board) and "resident as engaged citizen." In the latter role, residents become active in a variety of organizations and networks that can strengthen their communities. This, the authors assert, can be more beneficial than resident empowerment through a formal governance role.

tween formal governance venues and informal interactions between the partners and the project director.

Ensuring Adequate Accountability

The collaborative partners would ultimately be judged by their success in getting programs on-line and helping residents obtain and retain jobs. Toward this end, the collaboratives would have to ensure the accountability both of the partners (for meeting their resource and service commitments to the program) and of the Jobs-Plus staff (for the program's performance in reaching its employment goals). But accountability is more difficult to achieve in collaboratives than in traditional organizations, because collaboratives lack the advantage of having a single, hierarchical authority to enforce compliance.[17]

To an important extent, the performance of Jobs-Plus has depended on the performance of the many public agencies that donate services (for example, the welfare departments and workforce investment agencies) and of the public and private agencies that provide services on a referral basis at no direct cost to the program. At best, however, the commitments of these partners has been expressed in memoranda of understanding rather than in formally enforceable performance contracts. Ensuring high performance has thus depended heavily on the will of collaborative partners to insist on accountability from one another in meeting their obligations to Jobs-Plus. Often this will was lacking, especially where the partners regarded Jobs-Plus as primarily the housing authority's responsibility. Moreover, some partner agencies were reluctant to criticize the performance of other partners with whom they had long-standing relationships on other projects that they were anxious not to disrupt.

Jobs-Plus staff also sometimes felt powerless to get agencies to improve their performance when the program depended on those agencies to bear the cost of the services they provided. Indeed, a site representative said that the Jobs-Plus programs were like "beggars" in feeling that they had to accept the services and staff contributed by partner agencies even if these turned out to be inappropriate. Often it fell to the project directors to coax and cajole busy officials of partner agencies to follow through on their important commitments to Jobs-Plus. This was a time-consuming burden, often made worse by turnover of the agency staff who had helped secure the original commitments.

Partner agencies that provided services as vendors to Jobs-Plus could be held accountable through formal, performance-based contracts (usually with the housing authority, for Jobs-Plus) that made payments contingent on meeting specified outcomes. But even this arrangement was not easy or clear-cut. For example, Seattle Jobs-Plus did not renew its contract with a vendor and collaborative partner whose services were deemed inappropriate for a resident population that included large numbers of immigrants and refugees; the nonrenewal created a very awkward situation, because this partner agency's senior staff had been

[17]For a general discussion of the challenges to accountability in human service collaboratives and some alternative responses to those challenges, see Bardach and Lesser, 1996.

committed, active participants in founding the program, and they were influential members of the local workforce development community.

Given the housing authority's central role in Jobs-Plus, many of the program's performance problems require the housing authority's intervention to resolve them. Thus, the collaboratives have depended heavily on — though they could not legally compel it — the housing authority's willingness to monitor the program closely and demand high performance from the project director and other program staff, most of whom were on its payroll. Indeed, some of the most serious performance problems arose where the housing authority's supervision and responsiveness were deficient. For example, Cleveland Jobs-Plus became a casualty of a broader management crisis that engulfed the housing authority and required its executive director and senior managers to focus their time and energy on internal administrative reforms. In this environment, initially enthusiastic higher-level administrators could not give adequate attention to the needs and problems of Jobs-Plus, contributing to the program's protracted start-up and the eventual decision to withdraw from the demonstration.

The collaborative partners, including the housing authorities, were further handicapped in holding the program's staff and service providers accountable for performance by the lack of consistent and reliable data on the progress of participants in completing program activities and securing or retaining jobs. This made it difficult for the partners to know how well or how poorly the programs were doing — and to offer appropriate assistance. MDRC has taken steps to ensure that all the Jobs-Plus programs have implemented better tracking and reporting systems.

To ensure accountability and adequate performance in the absence of formal compliance mechanisms, and given the limitations of formal contracts, the collaboratives had to rely substantially on informal peer relationships among the partner representatives. This is consistent with research on organizational networks, which shows that members draw heavily on historical patterns of cooperation, personal relationships, and trust — and not solely on legal authority or sanctions — in maintaining their accountability to one another for a collective undertaking.[18] For example, the executive director in Chattanooga (who inherited Jobs-Plus upon his appointment, after the program had already been in operation) would have likely terminated housing authority support for Jobs-Plus long ago but was not disposed to challenge the other partners' interest in continuing the program; he ruefully acknowledged that these were politically powerful people whose presence in a room would compel him to stay and listen. It is also possible, however, that peer relationships may sometimes serve to cover up nonperformance by collaborative partners. And resident leaders, who are not typically part of such peer networks, may not be able to exert as much interpersonal influence as other partners in trying to hold agencies accountable, even though residents have the most to gain or lose from the agencies' performance.

The demonstration has therefore depended heavily on MDRC and the national funding partners (especially The Rockefeller Foundation) to be voices for accountability over the Jobs-

[18]Sabel, 1994; Jones, Hesterly, and Borgatti, 1997; Faerman, McCaffrey, and Van Slyke, 1999; Milward and Provan, 2000.

Plus programs. They have urged the partner agencies — especially the housing authority — to fulfill their commitments and have pushed the program staff to take corrective actions when performance lagged. Such active oversight is understandable, of course, given their mission to produce a full and fair test of the Jobs-Plus model. But their efforts also reflect an attempt to fill an accountability gap at the local level. Although, the local partners have sometimes criticized the adequacy of the technical assistance provided by the national partners, the time and energy that the national partners have invested in trying to hold the programs accountable for better performance are a testament to the difficulty of establishing adequate local systems of accountability under a collaborative governance structure.

Formal governance systems may also matter for accountability in Jobs-Plus. Indeed, one important reason to construct a formal governance system for a community intervention is to provide an official opportunity and venue for the partners *as a group* to hold the program staff and the agencies accountable for the program's performance. In this regard, the executive committee model used in some Jobs-Plus sites may function better than the full collaborative model, particularly if its members include senior-level agency delegates and influential resident representatives. First of all, since an executive committee is smaller than the full collaborative, its members can meet more often and can pay closer attention to the program's day-to-day struggles and accomplishments. Second, to the extent that such a committee plays an important decisionmaking role, it may foster a deeper sense of responsibility among the delegates for the program's successes and failures and, thus, increase their willingness to be a forceful voice for better performance. In fact, even where the financial commitment of the agencies may not be large, the delegates, by playing a highly visible role, have invested some of their personal and professional prestige in the initiative, and have put them on the line. A similar high-visibility role for residence leaders on a governing board may position and encourage them to be forceful in holding the agencies and program staff accountable for the program's performance. Finally, the smaller size of the group may help promote a sense of peer accountability among the delegates in the absence of hierarchical authority.[19]

Conclusion

The experiences of the Jobs-Plus collaboratives in trying to build venues and processes for contributing ideas and making decisions inclusively and productively point to a number of important lessons. One is that attempts to involve all the partners in a broad, formal governance role — which was typically unproductive and which many partners did not want — appears not to have been worth the effort it took. In retrospect, there *was* value in convening a broader association of organizations, but primarily as a network of strategic partners and advisors who would contribute to the program in specific ways and who would meet much less often and not assume responsibility for determining the program's overall content and direction. Formal governance authority over the program as a whole should be limited to a smaller group of highly committed delegates (like the executive committees in some sites)

[19]Bardach and Lesser, 1996.

who will strive to hold the program and each other accountable to high standards of performance. Creating and fostering a variety of alternative, less formal opportunities for partners to become engaged in shaping the content and direction of the program can also be a way to emphasize the principle of inclusion and, in some circumstances, might also be more productive.

Jobs-Plus could also have been better served if representatives to the core decisionmaking group or to the broader network of partners included individuals who had significant decisionmaking authority within their own agencies or who had the ear of those decisionmakers and were willing to promote the program's interests vigorously.

Considerable commitment, skills, and time were needed from the project directors to involve the collaboratives effectively in the program. A project director had to appreciate the value of shared decisionmaking, promote opportunities for partners' voices to be heard, and develop good working relationships with key stakeholders inside and outside the formal collaborative meetings. But the project director also had to assume the preparation and follow-up needed to ensure that meetings and exchanges with the partners produced decisions that were then implemented. Staff support — for example, from an associate director or administrative assistant — could have greatly eased this effort. In general, the Jobs-Plus collaboratives underinvested in the administrative functions (particularly relating to governance) that collaborative involvement requires.

Finally, accountability mechanisms were not well developed in most sites. Perhaps such factors as clearer lines of authority between the collaborative's key decisionmakers and the project director, more explicit interagency agreements outlining the agencies' commitment to Jobs-Plus, better data and reporting on residents' performance, and a better-functioning governing board whose members place a high priority on accountability might improve the program's performance.

Chapter 4

Collaboration in Service Delivery

Introduction

A public housing resident spoke in exasperation about her struggles to get the child care, transportation, housing assistance, and health care that she and her family needed, in addition to employment services to help her secure and retain a job: "They keep splitting you," she said, referring to a bewildering array of service providers, each with different eligibility rules and procedures. Jobs-Plus offers a service approach that tries to address this predicament, which is so common among welfare-to-work clients. The program attempts to offer residents a comprehensive and coherent set of employment and support services in a readily accessible, individualized manner. This requires that the collaborating public and nonprofit agencies find new ways to work together in delivering services. The agencies have to be willing to make considerable adjustments in their policies, procedures, and staffing. In short, they must take a more coordinated approach.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Jobs-Plus coincides with public administrative reform efforts to promote collaboration between public and nonprofit service agencies as a way to rationalize and coordinate "fragmented" service systems while relieving taxpayers of costly service duplication. Indeed, two distinctive features of Jobs-Plus make *interagency coordination* in service delivery a key principle and critical objective of collaboration on this project. On the one hand, the program refers residents to local services that are supplied off-site by other agencies. On the other hand, as a "place-based, saturation strategy," Jobs-Plus also brings agency staff on-site to make services readily available to *all* employment-age residents of the housing development, not just to specific subcategories of clients. These features challenge the tendency of public agencies and nonprofit service vendors to serve only a particular constituency (such as TANF recipients), to operate out of separate locations, to adhere to distinct regulations and procedures in providing services, and to use separate criteria and data systems for measuring participants' progress. Jobs-Plus must also contend with other obstacles that typically make joint action by different agencies difficult, including distinct organizational cultures (for example, professional vocabulary, mission, goals, concerns, reward structures); jurisdictional conflicts across agencies; and bureaucratic rigidities within them.[1] Thus, with these challenges in mind, it is important to consider how much and how well the Jobs-Plus partners were able to transcend their institutional boundaries and coordinate the delivery of needed services for Jobs-Plus participants. This chapter explores such issues and identifies various institutional accommodations that the partner agencies adopted to coordinate their efforts.

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[1] McNeely, 1995; Bardach, 1998; Dunkle and Surles, 1998; Leonard, 1999; Martinson, 1999.

Coordinating with the Welfare Agency to Serve TANF Recipients

The welfare agencies across the sites looked to Jobs-Plus as a promising way to reach TANF recipients who reside in public housing, who may be among the agencies' "hardest-to-employ" recipients. Compared with the agencies' welfare-to-work initiatives, the comprehensive, place-based service approach of Jobs-Plus might have a better chance of helping such recipients to secure and retain employment.[2] However, recruiting and serving this population would be more difficult for Jobs-Plus unless certain TANF rules were modified and unless frontline welfare workers cooperated more explicitly in working with Jobs-Plus staff to serve their joint clientele.

Coordinating Rules Governing Participation in Jobs-Plus

Like all welfare recipients, those living in public housing are obliged under TANF regulations to participate in welfare-to-work activities in return for TANF benefits. Therefore, in order to encourage residents to participate in Jobs-Plus activities, it was essential to get the welfare agency in each demonstration site to recognize participation in Jobs-Plus activities as fulfilling TANF requirements. Residents would simply not have time to do both, and, unlike Jobs-Plus, the welfare agency could impose financial sanctions (a reduction or elimination of a family's cash aid) for nonparticipation in its required activities.

Impressively, the welfare agencies in all but one of the seven demonstration sites adopted this arrangement on behalf of Jobs-Plus. (St. Paul Jobs-Plus is the exception.) This accomplishment, widely viewed as a major victory for the program, was facilitated by the inclusion of the welfare agency as a mandatory partner on the collaborative — in most cases, with senior-level welfare representatives advocating for this accommodation in their agencies during the design phase of the program. This concession not only enabled Jobs-Plus to offer TANF recipients in the housing development a critical incentive for enrolling in the program but also gave Jobs-Plus in some sites leeway to develop on-site services and make referrals to off-site services that the welfare agency might not otherwise recognize as satisfying welfare-to-work obligations. Such an agreement can be seen in the following summary of the terms of the agreement between Jobs-Plus and the Department of Social Services (DSS) in Baltimore:

> DSS has agreed to assign all current and future TANF households residing in Gilmor Homes to Jobs-Plus as their work activity. . . . Jobs-Plus will be responsible to begin tracking and reporting to DSS starting in November; DSS has agreed to grant Jobs-Plus . . . complete flexibility in activities that are countable towards meeting the twenty hour a week work activity requirements; DSS will

[2] Of particular relevance to Jobs-Plus are recent attempts to get local employment agencies and welfare agencies to work together on programs to help welfare recipients train for or obtain employment. Promising examples of interagency efforts involving employment agencies and welfare agencies are cited in Sussman, 2000.

> maintain its standard conciliation and sanction policies for non-compliance; however, it will rely on Jobs-Plus to initiate the request for conciliation or sanctions.

As is usually the case with agreements negotiated with senior agency officials, additional efforts were required to ensure that this one was relayed to midlevel managers and then was carried out by frontline staff in their work with the residents. In particular, the case managers at the local welfare office had to understand these new regulations and how they apply to members of their caseload living in a Jobs-Plus development. In some instances, Jobs-Plus participants found themselves having to explain these new rules to their welfare caseworkers.

To address this problem, a number of sites sponsored joint training of welfare agency and Jobs-Plus staff, helping them understand one another's operations and services and alerting welfare personnel to the need to count Jobs-Plus as a qualifying welfare-to-work assignment. In Seattle, the project director or site coordinator (formerly a welfare agency representative on the Jobs-Plus collaborative) and various staff members attend the monthly case manager meetings of the Rainier Valley Community Service Office[3] several times a year, and they are given time on the agenda to present updated information about Jobs-Plus. These visits have been prompted by high welfare staff turnover and the continuing need to orient case managers to the program. In Baltimore, the district welfare office for Gilmor Homes incorporated the requirement to refer TANF recipients to Jobs-Plus into its formal training and standard intake procedures for case managers. As a welfare agency representative on the collaborative emphasized: "Now Jobs-Plus is part of the standard operating procedures at Pennsylvania North DSS." This change represented an institutional solution to the need to orient new case managers to Jobs-Plus in the aftermath of welfare staff turnover.

Jobs-Plus case managers therefore have the role of providing TANF recipients in Jobs-Plus with intensive on-site case management and follow-up to ensure that they fulfill their work requirements and make progress toward self-sufficiency. Although the welfare agencies retain the authority to sanction residents for noncompliance with the welfare-to-work participation mandate or to exempt them from TANF time limits, they rely on Jobs-Plus case managers to provide the information needed to enforce this requirement. Jobs-Plus staff and frontline welfare agency staff therefore have had to find ways to communicate about their respective clients' service needs, assignments, and progress in moving toward employment.

In contrast, in St. Paul, the welfare agency does not recognize Jobs-Plus participation as a way to fulfill work requirements under the Minnesota Family Investment Plan (MFIP) for TANF recipients at Mt. Airy Homes. Since most TANF recipients at Mt. Airy are assigned to MFIP employment counselors around the city, this means that Jobs-Plus staff have to check

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[3]The Department of Social and Human Services in Seattle is organized into Community Service Offices (CSOs) that have responsibility for TANF recipients of a specific geographic area. The administrator of Rainier Valley's CSO is the official welfare agency representative on the collaborative, although his deputy administrator generally represents him at collaborative meetings these days.

with these counselors to ensure that TANF recipients at Mt. Airy are not undertaking Jobs-Plus activities that overlap and conflict with their individual MFIP work plans.[4] Welfare agency representatives have expressed concern that Jobs-Plus may be duplicating services that TANF recipients at Mt. Airy Homes can get elsewhere to fulfill their welfare-to-work participation requirements.[5]

Cultivating Cross-Agency Relationships Among Frontline Staff

In addition to meeting official reporting requirements, Jobs-Plus staff have cultivated informal working relationships with district welfare case managers to coordinate their work with residents. Joint training often introduced Jobs-Plus staff to their welfare agency counterparts. But other formal links between Jobs-Plus and frontline welfare staff have also been created at some sites, particularly those where senior-level welfare support on the collaborative has been strong. In Seattle, Jobs-Plus participation received its own code on the welfare agency's Jobs Automated System (JAS), even though Jobs-Plus does not have a contract with that agency, as other code recipients do. Having this code gives Jobs-Plus name recognition and credibility in its dealings with the frontline welfare staff who work directly with programs and clients. In Dayton, the presence on the collaborative of the senior staff from the Montgomery County Department of Human Services (MCDHS)[6] helped get assigned to Jobs-Plus a Special Projects person, an Agency Liaison, and a Job Bank Liaison from the city's Job Center to work with Jobs-Plus staff on an ongoing basis. And in Baltimore, the welfare agency called for an ongoing working relationship between the director and staff of Jobs-Plus program services and the case managers at the district DSS center, "to ensure coordination, information sharing, and access to DSS services." These same case managers represent DSS at the Jobs-Plus collaborative meetings, where they network with the program's staff, exchanging information about residents' needs and available welfare-to-work services.

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[4]MFIP in Ramsey County assigns all TANF recipients to an employment counselor and a financial worker. The former negotiates individual employment plans with TANF recipients; monitors their compliance with the plan; and sanctions them for noncompliance. The financial worker calculates recipients' eligibility for TANF grants. Currently, the Ramsey County Department of Human Services contracts out the work of employment counselors to local nonprofit organizations. Since MFIP's implementation, the Wilder Foundation has been receiving from a quarter to a third of these contracts.

[5]An MFIP employment counselor — a Wilder Foundation employee funded by the welfare agency — has been outstationed at Mt. Airy Homes. But only some of the TANF recipients there have been assigned by the welfare agency to the on-site MFIP employment counselor. Participants could choose to work with off-site employment counselors. However, one benefit of the proximity of the employment counselor is that the Jobs-Plus staff can negotiate with the counselor on an ad hoc basis to get Jobs-Plus job search activities to "count" toward fulfilling an individual's MFIP work activities.

[6]As of July 2000, MCDHS became the Department of Job and Family Services.

Other Welfare Agency Accommodations

The presence of senior-level welfare agency representatives on the collaboratives in some sites also paved the way for Jobs-Plus participants to receive agency benefits or services from which non-Jobs-Plus TANF recipients were precluded. In Dayton, the welfare agency head was instrumental in getting modified the eligibility rules for Ohio's Prevention, Retention, and Contingency program (which provides emergency funds for TANF recipients who are nearing their time limits for benefits) to allow these funds to be used as rent vouchers by employed Jobs-Plus participants who are falling behind on their rent. Such assistance gave Jobs-Plus and housing management staff additional time to work with those residents and to stay the process of filing a petition in court for their eviction. In Los Angeles, a senior official of Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), who is a member of the Jobs-Plus executive committee, arranged for Imperial Courts and William Mead Homes to be considered as sites for a CalWORKs (GAIN/TANF) pilot transportation program starting in spring 2001. As one of several GAIN initiatives for meeting the transportation needs of the working welfare population, this program will provide a pool of vehicles to TANF recipients who are working and living in a public housing development, to help them get to and from work, training, job search, child care arrangements, and medical and social service appointments.[7] At a planning meeting, the GAIN official insisted that Imperial Courts and William Mead Homes were suitable developments for the pilot program because their Jobs-Plus programs on the premises were working with outstationed GAIN workers to help TANF recipients secure jobs and support services.

Coordinating Multi-Agency Staff to Provide On-Site Services

As a place-based approach to addressing the employment needs of public housing residents, Jobs-Plus provided some services on-site. In doing so, Jobs-Plus relied on a mix of staff including (1) those assigned to the program by public or nonprofit agencies, often on a part-time basis, and (2) regular employees of the program, who were usually funded by the housing authority. The agencies that contributed these staff were often collaborative partners. For example, the welfare department placed welfare-to-work case managers on-site, and, at some of the programs, the former JTPA agency did the same with job developers and other employment specialists. At several programs, other public institutions (for example, the St. Paul Public Schools) or nonprofit agencies (such as Washington Works, in Seattle) outstationed similar staff or other kinds of social service workers. This represented a major departure from existing personnel policies for many of these agencies, public and nonprofit. Outstationing staff was especially unusual for the welfare agency, and it once again was negotiated with the support of senior-level representatives on the collaborative during the early stages of Jobs-Plus. This colocation of staff — and the provision of some employment-related

[7] The program is based on similar transportation programs in Europe and in Portland, Oregon, although none of these specifically serve the welfare population.

activities and support services on-site — made Jobs-Plus a limited version of a one-stop employment center.

Despite the colocation of staff, the programs encountered a number of constraints that made it a challenge to build a well-integrated multi-agency program. The constraints had to do with agency staffing policies, funding rules, and reporting relationships.

Categorical Funding Restrictions

Because of their funders or agency missions, outstationed agency staff often faced categorical restrictions on the clients they could serve. For example, the welfare case managers assigned to Jobs-Plus at most sites could work only with TANF recipients; and nonprofit service providers usually focused on specialized groups, as in the case of partner agencies in Seattle that serve refugee women or East African immigrants. Such restrictions could have hampered the efforts of this place-based strategy to serve an entire housing development, and they could have limited administrators' flexibility in deploying key personnel (for example, in matching residents to staff in terms of a resident's needs, a staff member's expertise, and the personalities of each).

It is important to emphasize, however, that categorical funding restrictions generally did not present insurmountable problems for Jobs-Plus in its efforts to secure all employment-age residents. Colocating staff from various agencies on-site was usually undertaken only for key services for which a substantial number of residents were eligible, and individual service needs that could not be met on-site were addressed through outside referrals. The challenge for the Jobs-Plus programs, then, was to make intensive use of agency partners and other local providers in filling these service gaps — and to develop effective interagency coordination mechanisms and case management procedures for this purpose. At many Jobs-Plus programs, agency staff admitted that they often simply assisted one another unofficially when residents were not eligible for their caseloads: "We just do it. There's no policy."

However, residency restrictions on providing on-site services for Jobs-Plus as a place-based program do present a challenge in addressing the employment needs of residents' partners or family members who are not on the lease. These are primarily single adult males, often ex-offenders, who frequently come to Jobs-Plus for services but are ineligible as non-residents or illegal residents. Yet they cannot be overlooked by Jobs-Plus, because they often have considerable influence over the employment patterns and lives of the residents — for example, by discouraging their resident partners from pursuing off-site employment in order to maintain control over the relationship. But the Jobs-Plus programs have been resourceful in finding ways to assist these men. Baltimore Jobs-Plus has identified and built referral relationships with local providers who offer services for which the men are eligible, such as shelter, food, substance abuse treatment, and employment services. Jobs-Plus staff members coordinate with these agencies to address any conduct, such as domestic violence, that impacts the lives and employment of Jobs-Plus participants. Seattle Jobs-Plus has been working with the housing management office to use the rent incentives policy as a way to get partners and family members onto the lease, inasmuch as there is no penalty for additional income in the household. And the Rainier Vista Leadership Team and the management office are planning

a "Father's Initiative," which will attempt to redesign housing authority policies to make fathers and partners feel more welcome in the community and to help them deal with drug abuse problems or criminal records.

Building Multi-Agency On-Site Teams

Across the sites, the project directors have sought (not always successfully) to ensure that the agency staff members who are assigned to Jobs-Plus are suitable for its clientele and service needs. An MDRC operations representative emphasized that the programs sometimes feel that they have to accept any agency staff who happen to be available for rotation to Jobs-Plus, especially in the face of funding limits on permanent Jobs-Plus personnel. For example, the staff persons assigned by the Department of Human Services to Chattanooga Jobs-Plus turned out to be a financial worker (who calculates clients' eligibility for TANF grants) and a mental health worker for recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Neither person was an employment counselor who could assist the work efforts of TANF recipients at Harriet Tubman Homes.

The reporting relationships between the project director and the outstationed agency personnel could also be a potential impediment to integrating services when relying on staff from multiple agencies. To be accountable for the performance of the program's staff, the project director needs the authority to direct and supervise their work. The institutional partners must be willing to consider alternative supervisory procedures that delegate to the Jobs-Plus project director some administrative authority over their outstationed staff. The fact that such authority was granted to project directors in varying degrees across the programs stands as an important institutional adaptation that was facilitated by the involvement of the agencies' representatives on the Jobs-Plus collaboratives. In some cases, this authority involved adjustments in the agencies' hiring and personnel policies to accommodate the program. For example, in Baltimore, the Office of Economic Development (OED) allowed the Jobs-Plus project director to interview, select, and supervise the on-site job developer, whose position was funded by OED. One knowledgeable observer described this as a "major concession on the part of OED." Various institutional partners modified their personnel policies to permit staff to work on-site on weekends and at hours outside the normal business day in order to accommodate working residents. For example, in Baltimore, OED allowed its staff to hold workshops and job fairs on Saturdays at Gilmor Homes.

Using outstationed agency staff requires the project director to have considerable administrative, leadership, and staff development skills. The outstationed staff come from agencies whose missions, priorities, and standard service procedures do not always accommodate Jobs-Plus easily. Some of the nonprofit agencies, for example, were originally drawn to Jobs-Plus simply as a source of contract opportunities. Yet the project director has to instill an understanding of and commitment to the Jobs-Plus approach, knowing that the notion of resident participation in service design and delivery, or a performance-based pursuit of employment outcomes, might seem alien or nonsensical to staff whose agencies have different orientations and practices.

Having collaborative partners as service vendors often complicates the project director's efforts to address such differences. For example, at Seattle Jobs-Plus, the outstationed staff of an advocacy organization for refugee women insisted on referring to themselves as counselors instead of job coaches; and they wanted to advocate for residents who refused to work, instead of finding ways to encourage them to seek employment. Because this organization was also a collaborative partner and a valued supporter of the program, the project director and the MDRC site representative made extensive efforts to build trust with the agency's leadership and to negotiate common understandings of service approaches. They also provided training to outstationed staff on what it means to be a job coach, and they negotiated disputes over working hours and reporting structures. This agency has now developed an appreciation of the need for employment and training services in the community, and it is adapting parts of its own program to provide additional vocational training and business English as a Second Language. However, reaching this point required commitment from all parties to preserve both the collaborative and the vendor relationship.

The project director also has to make sure that the Jobs-Plus and outstationed agency staff meet regularly to coordinate their efforts and work cohesively as a team, especially since some staff are assigned to Jobs-Plus only a few days a week on a part-time basis. In Cleveland, such meetings between the project director and service vendors were sporadic, making it difficult to implement the program's components; vendors sought to maintain their traditional approaches rather than adapting to accommodate the special features of Jobs-Plus. In St. Paul, the staff worked together reasonably well without the benefit of a project director, because vendor services predated Jobs-Plus and were coordinated and sustained by longstanding relationships among participating agencies and staff. But this collaborative also appointed a project manager in the summer of 2000, in the face of increased needs for better coordination as the program expanded.

Coordinating Off-Site Services

Jobs-Plus's use of outside agencies to provide off-site most of the job search, education, training, and support services that residents need is increasing as funding constraints limit the number of on-site staff that the programs can maintain. Jobs-Plus therefore relies heavily on the interagency coordinating efforts of on-site case managers and employment specialists. They are responsible for ensuring that the various off-site providers offer an appropriate "package of services" to help residents retain jobs and secure better ones. This responsibility carries with it the need to communicate with staff from various agencies that work with individual residents and to track the progress of the residents across programs and jobs.

Doing the job of interagency case management well might help prevent the problems that can arise when an individual is in multiple social service systems that have similar goals but sometimes confront the client with contradictory requirements and recommendations. For example, one institutional partner from a welfare agency complained of difficulties in referring welfare-to-work clients to the local JTPA agency for employment services and job placements. JTPA staff, this partner asserted, frequently changed the type of job or employ-

ment program that had already been specified for a client by a welfare-to-work self-sufficiency coach. Moreover, they often did so without consulting the self-sufficiency coach, thereby jeopardizing the client's TANF benefits. Fortunately, some agency representatives on the collaboratives have played an important role in securing high-level policy changes and personnel accommodations to support the effort to coordinate the work of Jobs-Plus with their agencies, and to prevent or resolve such conflicts.

Coordinating Intake and Referral Processes

As the first step toward coordinating client service assignments, all the programs have developed protocols for referring Jobs-Plus participants to affiliated service agencies. Often the institutional partners on the collaboratives were responsible for jointly developing and implementing protocols in their agencies. These include agreements to send or receive resident referrals, formalized with written agreements as Jobs-Plus vendors. Referral systems need not be technically sophisticated. For example, Baltimore Jobs-Plus and its affiliated agencies use different-colored referral forms. The color of the copy that Jobs-Plus retains for follow-up identifies the agency to which the resident was referred. The original, which the resident takes to the referral site, is colored to signal that this client has already undergone an intake process at Jobs-Plus and did not just arrive "cold" off the street; the agency can contact Jobs-Plus for any desired intake information.

It is often recommended that common intake and assessment forms be shared by affiliated agencies as a way to collect demographic and background information in determining a client's service needs at one sitting, thus saving everyone time and money and speeding up service provision.[8] Jobs-Plus sites have developed such common documents. In general, however, creating them takes considerable time as agencies share program information and negotiate informational categories — a process that seems worthwhile only for a cooperative effort that provides a significant number of clients for the partners. Wherever Jobs-Plus was not such a program for its affiliates, the sites did not develop common forms.

Coordinating and Sharing Client Tracking Data

Jobs-Plus also needed the agencies to share the information that they separately collected to track residents' progress from agency to agency as they applied for jobs or for job preparation, child care, and transportation services. What services had clients been using? What jobs had they held? For how long? What further assistance did they need to keep a job or get a better one? But automated efforts to share information faced significant hurdles. Getting agencies to agree on common data collection and sharing procedures is usually difficult both politically and technically, and agencies often erroneously perceive data-sharing as a threat to client confidentiality and their own jurisdiction.[9] As a public administrative reform expert

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[8] Altman, 1990; Together We Can, 2000.

[9] The Together We Can collaborative project to promote comprehensive family services delivery observes: "Many partners believe, however, that . . . maintaining open and effective inter-agency and agency-school communication requires difficult changes in existing laws. As a result, part-
(continued)

emphasized in regard to developing and accessing common databases of client information: "A common database is extremely important as a tool for rational planning and resource management and seems to threaten no turf. Yet it is technically difficult to work out, requires many procedural changes in the partner agencies, and opens up the possibility that agency outsiders will be able to second guess one's decisions."[10] Furthermore, none of the sites began to develop a customized management information system (MIS) until program implementation was well under way.

Those sites with the most extensive, formalized, and automated ways of sharing data have benefited from previous sharing agreements and from the political influence of their senior-level collaborative members, or from the dominant role of a collaborative member over employment and support services in the locality. In Dayton, Jobs-Plus case managers and job developers recommended the features of their MIS, which a consultant designed. Because their relationships with counterparts in affiliated agencies had developed through joint training and ongoing communication about residents, they were so familiar with one another's documentation procedures that additional agency input was not needed. Also, the Dayton program's access to other data systems was facilitated by the efforts of institutional partners to create shared information systems prior to Jobs-Plus. These included an agreement — to which the housing authority was a party — that required agencies at the one-stop Job Center to share information about clients who used their services. Also helpful were the ongoing efforts of the welfare agency in Dayton to create shared information systems with its vendors and with the housing authority to track welfare recipients' participation in welfare-to-work activities.

In concluding this section, however, it must be emphasized that Jobs-Plus also requires a high level of ad hoc and informal interagency communication and cooperation. Indeed, the diplomatic skills required of Jobs-Plus staff in coordinating with off-site service providers prompted an MDRC official to refer to the program as a challenging "finesse model" of service delivery. That is, like many service agencies, Jobs-Plus keeps track of residents by relying heavily on relationships cultivated between staff and their counterparts at other agencies. For example, the project director and site coordinator at Seattle Jobs-Plus draw heavily on peer networks with former graduate school colleagues who are now directors and staff of social service agencies in the Seattle area.

In this regard, interagency collaboration in Jobs-Plus resembles the "flexible production networks" found among business firms that are highly dependent on interpersonal relationships and informal "connection mechanisms" to circulate information and coordinate service delivery. Production networks are said to require formalization through contracts or protocol only to the degree that doing so can support these exchanges without undercutting their

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ners never move beyond simple colocation strategies that do not require them to exchange information about individual children and families." The project points, however, to studies — such as those by Greenberg and Levy (1991) and Hobbs (1991) — that say that such statutory changes are rarely necessary. Instead, sufficient overlap usually exists in partners' confidentiality rules to allow them to share information while protecting clients' rights and well-being.

[10] Bardach, 1998, p. 285.

flexibility.[11] Yet the informality of most interagency working arrangements is also the source of their fragility and vulnerability — for instance, to staff turnover. This was certainly the case for the Jobs-Plus programs.[12] Project directors and agency representatives must therefore exercise continual vigilance in providing interagency staff orientations and networking opportunities — for example, through collaborative meetings — to ensure interagency coordination in serving clients.

Coordinating Services with One-Stops in the New Workforce Development System

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 calls for local workforce investment areas to establish one-stop service delivery systems. In this new structure, a variety of core employment services — including eligibility determination, career assessment, job search and job placement assistance, and referrals to education and training activities — must all be available in at least one physical location.[13] This requirement raises an important question: How will a place-based initiative like Jobs-Plus operate in this new context?

The most systematic and extensive effort to connect Jobs-Plus with a one-stop has been undertaken in Dayton. The experiences there offer interesting insights about the balance that must be struck between, on the one hand, the accessibility of on-site services as a way to engage the "hard-to-employ" and, on the other hand, the proximity of off-site services to the actual world of work beyond the housing development, for which the services are preparing the residents. Even before the passage of this national legislation, Montgomery County took steps in this direction, creating the most ambitious one-stop employment services center found in any of the Jobs-Plus cities. The spacious, mall-like Montgomery County Job Center serves disadvantaged job-seekers by offering a comprehensive array of employment, training, and support services from public and nonprofit providers as well as employer associations.

The institutional partners on Dayton's collaborative (many of whom were involved in the planning of the Job Center) initially envisioned Jobs-Plus as a kind of feeder program for the center, recruiting "hard-to-employ" public housing residents through intensive outreach, orienting and directing them to services at the Job Center, and then following up with on-site case management at DeSoto Bass Courts, the housing development. This did happen, to some extent. Jobs-Plus arranged referrals of residents to various public and nonprofit agencies at the Job Center for employment-related services, including assistance with job search, skills development, health care, transportation, and other support services. Residents attended job fairs at the center to hear about new opportunities and to interview with employ-

[11]Galaskiewicz and Shatin, 1981; Sabel, 1994; Saxenian, 1994.

[12]Chisholm, 1989; Bardach, 1998; Bardach and Lesser, 1996.

[13]In Los Angeles, both Jobs-Plus sites are designated as one-stops under WIA in the system of education and employment programs operated by the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles.

ers. Some also conducted routine business at agencies conveniently located at this one-stop, such as the housing authority office, where they could play their rent and utility bills.

However, it quickly became clear that simply colocating agencies at the Job Center was not enough to inspire many residents to come forward to take advantage of those services, and it was no guarantee that residents could easily navigate among the providers to assemble an appropriate package of services. Jobs-Plus staff needed to work more directly with agency staff at the Job Center to ensure that DeSoto Bass Courts residents who visited the center would be connected to suitable activities to help them secure and retain employment. To facilitate better communication and coordination, specific welfare agency staff at the Job Center were assigned to work with Jobs-Plus participants. In addition, these welfare staff and Jobs-Plus case managers were given joint training on one another's operations and procedures.

Still, the original conception of Jobs-Plus as largely a feeder program for the one-stop turned out to be difficult to sustain, especially in the effort to recruit the hardest-to-employ residents. Many of them were not inclined to travel to the Job Center, and they seemed unlikely to take full advantage of its offerings. Instead, Jobs-Plus assumed assessment, referral, job placement, tracking, and support service responsibilities on-site at DeSoto Bass Courts. Program planners determined that Jobs-Plus could provide intensive case management and on-site services that would be more user-friendly, more personalized, and more responsive to residents' circumstances.

Now Dayton Jobs-Plus offers residents on-site job search assistance and employment skills courses at DeSoto Bass Courts, along with access to a computer laboratory linked to the Job Center's database, which lists job opportunities. Residents can join domestic violence and job support groups. Their children have access to nearby child care and an extensive array of on-site after-school nutritional, educational, and youth leadership programs operated by Jobs-Plus with the local public schools and leading civic groups. Because parents must be Jobs-Plus members in order for their children to participate in many of these activities, children and youth are playing an important role in recruiting their parents into the program. In effect, the Job Center has helped to support the employment activities of Jobs-Plus, rather than the other way around — especially in the effort to reach the hardest-to-employ.

Most of the Jobs-Plus programs in other cities make only intermittent use of the local one-stop as a source of services that are not available on-site. More formal, strategic, and extensive usage of one-stops has often been precluded by their underdeveloped condition in most of the Jobs-Plus localities so far.[14] However, Chattanooga Jobs-Plus is intensifying its use of employment services at the South East Tennessee Career Center, the local one-stop that is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and Tennessee's Department of Human Services (DHS). Although funding constraints have prompted this move away from on-site services

[14]In Baltimore, Jobs-Plus was originally also envisioned as a feeder program for the Empowerment Zone's Self-Motivated People's Village Center (SMPVC). But prolonged delays in the organization and construction of this facility changed this plan, although TANF recipients at Gilmor Homes now have the option of enrolling at SMPVC as well as at Jobs-Plus to fulfill their welfare-to-work requirements.

at Harriet Tubman Homes, various representatives on the collaborative have also emphasized the importance of residents' learning to navigate the world of services and work outside their insular housing development community. This reasoning promoted the senior Workforce Investment Board (WIB) representative on the collaborative to assign the WIB job developer to work with Jobs-Plus participants at the one-stop, rather than in offices at the housing development.

Conclusion

As a multi-agency initiative, Jobs-Plus requires considerable interagency coordination and various institutional adaptations in order for residents to take full and efficient advantage of the employment-related services offered by a wide array of on-site and off-site providers. This chapter makes clear that the degree of interagency coordination achieved to date falls far short of constituting a seamless, well-integrated network of services. Still, important progress has been made, and access to services has generally been adequate to meet the current and anticipated demands of participants in the Jobs-Plus programs.

The programs' experiences point to a number of actions that may be particularly important for making such a network of services work better. Changing the affiliated agencies' standard intake procedures and restructuring the roles of their frontline workers to generate a more sensible division of labor with Jobs-Plus staff who are serving the same residents can help to avoid placing duplicative — and even contradictory — demands on residents. Joint training of these staff and better sharing of data across agencies can also improve services to residents.

Jobs-Plus must, of course, operate within the broader policy context set by the welfare and workforce development systems, and special efforts have therefore been necessary in order to coordinate service delivery with those systems. Among the most important accomplishments has been getting welfare agencies to count participation in Jobs-Plus as satisfying TANF welfare-to-work participation requirements. This has helped to avoid placing residents in a situation where they forgo Jobs-Plus activities in order to comply with TANF requirements and avoid a financial sanction. Also important is the need to determine how to link Jobs-Plus with WIA one-stop career centers, which are becoming a central feature of local workforce development systems nationwide. Dayton Jobs-Plus points to some strategies for doing this, but also to the difficulties in attempting to use Jobs-Plus as a feeder agency for the one-stops, given the reluctance of many housing development residents to visit such a center.

Much of the success achieved by the Jobs-Plus programs so far in getting agencies to adapt their policies and coordinate service delivery can be attributed to the relationships that were forged among agency delegates to the collaboratives, as discussed in Chapter 3. Through their participation in collaborative meetings and informal interactions with the other partners, they learned about ways that their agencies could work together more effectively to serve Jobs-Plus participants. This suggests that it will also be important to sustain venues for regular interaction among agency delegates over time, in order to further improve

the interagency coordination that has been achieved so far, as program and resident needs and circumstances change.

Chapter 5

Jobs-Plus and the Housing Authority

Introduction

At a recent conference sponsored by The Rockefeller Foundation and MDRC for the staff of the Jobs-Plus sites around the nation, an entire session was dedicated to the opportunities and challenges of operating an employment program in public housing. The participants generally agreed that it would be difficult to imagine implementing Jobs-Plus elsewhere without the local housing authority in a prominent role; as a project director emphasized, the housing authority has had "its fingers in so many aspects of Jobs-Plus." Even though Jobs-Plus was envisioned as a collaborative endeavor, the initiative has required the active support of local housing authorities and has come to rely on them to perform an array of critical administrative responsibilities:

- The housing authority is the *landlord* of Jobs-Plus as a place-based program located in and serving public housing development tenants. The agency has contributed the program's facilities, in many cases taking housing units off-line and converting them to administrative and classroom use, which it then has had to maintain. Furthermore, since the financial incentives component of Jobs-Plus involves changes in rent rules, the housing authority is the only collaborative partner that can negotiate and administer them. But all this places Jobs-Plus and its participants under the housing authority's rules governing tenant conduct and property use.

- The housing authority has been the *fiduciary agent* for Jobs-Plus. It administers the funds provided for the program, as well as interagency agreements and contracts on the program's behalf. But this has required Jobs-Plus to submit its equipment and maintenance needs to the agency's bureaucratic procurement procedures.

- The housing authority has been the *employer* of many of Jobs-Plus's on-site staff, including the project director and resident staff, since these positions are financed by funds entrusted to the housing authority to administer. But this has bound Jobs-Plus by the agency's protracted hiring procedures and personnel policies.

- The housing authority has been the *lead agency* for Jobs-Plus; as the agency most directly involved with the residents and the housing development, the housing authority has been chosen by collaboratives across sites to coordinate their participation in the project. But this has placed the housing authority in a position to define the parameters for members' participation in Jobs-Plus, particularly since the agency's responsibilities and material interests in the program far outweigh those of the other partners.

The local housing authority's support for Jobs-Plus has been essential for the program's start-up and operations. But this has also come with costs for the program's productivity in meeting its implementation and employment targets. For example, Jobs-Plus staff have chafed as equipment and hiring requests slowly wound their way for approval from division to division in compliance with bureaucratic regulations, or as "one-strike" penalties against drug use in the housing development threatened to undercut their efforts to get residents to come forward for treatment. Furthermore, although the housing authority's support for Jobs-Plus is consistent with its efforts to expand its social welfare role and to help residents make progress toward self-sufficiency and private housing, the housing authority has had difficulty reconciling that role with the contending priorities of its property management role. As one executive director of a housing authority emphasized, the landlord, who is responsible for "law and order" — for collecting rents, maintaining property, and enforcing security — is not the most likely candidate to do social work and promote service experimentation on these premises. Consequently, Jobs-Plus staff have repeatedly asked: What does it take to implement Jobs-Plus effectively in partnership with the housing authority, in a way that is not so conflictual and that supports the program's efforts to be flexible and creative in meeting residents' needs?

This chapter tries to answer that question. It looks at the difficulties that the housing authority and Jobs-Plus have had in cooperating over the program's implementation. It also describes and offers for evaluation important changes that various housing authorities eventually made in their rules and operational procedures to facilitate and strengthen the implementation of Job-Plus.

Conflicting Missions: Social Welfare Versus Property Management

Since Jobs-Plus offers comprehensive services to help public housing residents achieve self-sufficiency, the housing authority's support for the program is consistent with its efforts to assume greater social welfare responsibilities for its tenants. Over the past 20 years, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been encouraging local housing authorities to help tenants secure employment and financial independence and to transition to private housing, with the support of federal legislation and funding for education, training, job placement, child care, youth programs, drug treatment, and other services for tenants.[1] These efforts correspond with social work and community development literatures that have long been calling for tenant access to social services in distressed communities, preferably on-site and integrated with building maintenance and security services, as a way to promote family self-sufficiency and community stability in both public and private housing.[2] The Resident Programs Division[3] was established within the housing authorities to deliver these services, typically in partnership with local public and nonprofit providers.

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[1]Bogdon, 1999; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2000.
[2]Briggs, Mueller, and Sullivan, 1997; Cohen and Phillips, 1997; Bowie, 2001a, 2001b.

This social welfare role has always been subordinate to the central responsibilities of public housing authorities: maintaining the quality of housing stock, collecting rents, holding down operating costs, enforcing lease agreements, and maintaining security at the housing developments. Social welfare and property management, however, represent different organizational and professional priorities that call for the housing authority to assume a dual "good cop/bad cop" role:

> There is a complexity in its social welfare role that the welfare agency does not face. . . . The housing authority is a different animal from many of the service agencies that historically provide services to the disadvantaged. It is a landlord, and therefore has specific rules and regulations that it must enforce for the fiscal solvency of the housing developments, and the safety of its premises. These create for the housing authority rigidities and priorities in attempting such an initiative [as Jobs-Plus].[4]

The tension between these two roles added to the operational challenges facing Jobs-Plus. Housing management staff enforce rental agreements that subject the finances, intimate relationships, and housekeeping practices of residents to intense, regular scrutiny in order to deter rent fraud and property damage. The management staff help the welfare agency to get residents who are on TANF to comply with their welfare-to-work obligations. And they work with the criminal justice system to enforce "one-strike" laws that automatically evict a resident, and sometimes the entire household, when a resident commits a felony or shelters a person who has a felony record. The housing management staff therefore unfortunately end up representing the "punitive face" of the housing authority and are often unfairly regarded by many residents with suspicion, even hostility, as intrusive busybodies: "PHA [Public Housing Authority] can be snoops. . . . PHA gets too deep in my business." Concerning a matter like domestic violence, the Housing Management Division can inadvertently discourage victims from coming forward, since staff must treat incidences as criminal offenses for police attention. Victims and their families can face eviction if assailants who are unregistered residents or ex-felons have been illegally on the premises.

It must be emphasized, however, that the housing management staff at Jobs-Plus sites showed considerable discretion in their enforcement of these rules, in the effort to avoid such unintended effects; they routinely "looked the other way" at evidence of unregistered males residing in the units as long as these men did not violate any other rules. One housing manager said that she usually finds out about such things anyway. Although it is an age-old problem that people will try to get things past her, she tries to work with residents and en-

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[3]This chapter will refer to this division as the Resident Programs Division, although it has different designations across sites, for example, the Resident Initiatives Division in Baltimore, the Resident Relations Division in Los Angeles, the Resident Opportunities and Community Initiatives of Cleveland, the Resident Services Division in Seattle, and the former Resident Economic Opportunity Division in Dayton, now the nonprofit organization Sankofa.

[4]Xavier de Souza Briggs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); personal communication.

courages them to tell her about their concerns and problems. As long as residents are honest with her, she will work with them to resolve their issues instead of punishing them. Several housing managers were greatly appreciated by residents for their case-by-case consideration of mitigating circumstances. An executive director emphasized, however, that the management staff must ultimately ensure that the agency does not find itself in "a legally tenuous position with the police department" — for example, "by permitting those with parole restrictions to reside in the developments."

In contrast, Jobs-Plus staff — like other Resident Programs Division staff — were viewed by housing management as "social worker and community organizer types" who regard an issue like domestic violence as a therapeutic and community development problem. From that perspective, they might be prone to withhold resident information from housing management in order to protect client confidentiality and encourage self-reporting and service requests. Yet addressing domestic violence cooperatively through a combination of police intervention and social services can benefit both the security of the housing development and the employment prospects of the resident involved — achieving the goals of housing management as well as Jobs-Plus staff.

Nevertheless, Jobs-Plus staff felt that they had to come out repeatedly in support of residents' privacy, because the residents initially viewed them with suspicion and skepticism as employees of a housing authority program and, therefore, as indistinguishable from on-site management staff. When Jobs-Plus was recruiting residents for the rent incentives component of the program, the residents expressed concerns that the registration and reporting requirements for the incentives would subject their finances and living arrangements to greater management scrutiny. This could disclose the presence of "the men" in their households: boyfriends or male relatives with felony records that bar them from joining the lease or being legally on the premises. The requirements might also reveal unreported income from relatives, partners, and "off-the-books" employment that residents depended on to subsidize TANF or SSI payments.[5] A resident outreach worker at Seattle Jobs-Plus said:

> I just knocked on the door of some houses, and they said that they really don't want to join the program, even with the rent policy, and they just close[d] the door. They think I am from the SHA [Seattle Housing Authority], so they don't want me to know what they're doing in their house.

Residents who did sign up for the rent incentives continued to express anxieties. In response to the idea proposed at a committee meeting to use SHA instructors for finance training classes, a resident said that she "would feel very uncomfortable with SHA instructors. That would give them a chance to know more about residents' finances and one more thing they can hold over your head" (for example, attendance and performance in these classes). In Seattle, the housing management staff person in charge of implementing the rent incentives at Rainier Vista emphasized:

[5] Edin and Lein, 1997.

> Even though it's Jobs-Plus, they know it's still SHA. I'm SHA. They're living here for a reason, and they want to keep it private. . . . [A]nything the housing authority has to do with they know there's some catch. They expect the housing authority to check up on them, or to create some problem for them. I think there's more skepticism and lack of trust. . . . You can't just sign up for the rent policy. They have to work with a job coach, but they don't want to. They don't want to have to deal with social service people.

Yet efforts by Jobs-Plus staff to distance themselves from housing management staff could backfire and undercut the on-site integration between the two that is needed for Jobs-Plus to serve the residents effectively. As an observer at one of the sites asked:

> Are housing authority site staff communicating with Jobs-Plus staff about the status of residents who are Jobs-Plus enrollees? Judging from the remarks of the employment counselors, the latter have found it important to distance themselves from housing authority policies and staff, so that they are not perceived by residents as "a policing arm of the housing authority." But this can lead to the right arm not knowing what the left arm is doing vis-à-vis a resident. . . .

It was particularly important for the housing management and the Jobs-Plus staffs to present a united front in encouraging residents to seek and retain employment. A Jobs-Plus staff member at one site complained about the mixed messages about work that the residents sometimes got from the housing authority. She noted that when management staff conducted a week of housing inspections, residents quit their jobs to get their units ready "for ridiculous rules like painting your door frame." In contrast, the otherwise supportive housing manager of that site emphasized: "My first job is to enforce the dwelling lease. My second job is to do training." The effective implementation of rent-based work incentives also required the program and the housing authority to share information on residents' employment status.

Bureaucratic Impediments

Jobs-Plus also endured delays when its staffing and expenditure decisions were subjected to housing authority personnel and procurement regulations that even other public agencies criticized as "too bureaucratic" and "too slow." This was a problem particularly for an experimental program charged with responding rapidly to shifting resident and employer needs. But the housing authority, like other public agencies, is expected to ensure fairness and integrity in hiring and spending decisions by requiring that they comply with explicit personnel and procurement rules and be reviewed by multiple divisions of the agency.

One illustration of how complicated and time-consuming the decisionmaking process can be comes from the Baltimore site. The Job-Plus staff there submitted a procurement request to draw on HUD's Economic Development/Social Services (ED/SS) funds allocated to the program in order to purchase a case management and self-sufficiency curriculum known as Pathways, developed by a Chicago-based program called Project Match. Jobs-Plus staff looked to this system as a way to address a pressing need: systematically guiding and track-

ing residents' use of various on-site and off-site services and providing follow-up support for residents who found jobs. But since Project Match was not specifically mentioned *by name* in the section of the ED/SS grant on case management services, it would have to submit a competitive bid to the housing authority to become a vendor payable by ED/SS funds. This bid would then have to wend its way through various housing authority divisions and managerial levels for approvals, while the housing authority also solicited other bids. A site representative's frustration at "being held hostage to a lengthy approval process" was expressed in his fear that "it is likely that there will be residents whose two-year time-limit clocks will have issued their final tick prior to [the housing authority's] letting a contract for this purpose." Baltimore Jobs-Plus ended up using its flexible technical assistance funds to purchase the system. Jobs-Plus staff and residents at other sites echoed similar kinds of frustrations over the housing authority's rigid and slow procurement process.

Delays over staffing and procurement requests were particularly troublesome for Jobs-Plus during the demonstration's start-up phase, when the institutional partners and residents were anxious to see tangible progress in getting a program on-line and placing residents in jobs. Some bureaucratic delays could be traced to problems with communication and coordination between the specialized divisions of the housing authority that were responsible for handling such requests. These divisions were accustomed to operating as self-contained entities, even though housing authority business increasingly required professional expertise and the attention of multiple divisions. This is particularly true of Jobs-Plus's components, such as the rent incentives, which call for a "cross functional team approach" among agency divisions.[6] Since the incentives are rent-based and require changes in existing rent systems, the Planning, Finance, Management Information System (MIS), Marketing, Housing Management, and Resident Programs Divisions are all implicated in developing and implementing rent incentives. Jobs-Plus requires these divisions to have the organizational and technical capacities to cooperate in sharing databases, collecting resident data, calculating rent levels, publicizing the incentives, recruiting residents, developing a customized tracking system, and administering HUD funds.

Modifications in agency priorities and procedures were needed to promote cooperation among divisional staff and expedite Jobs-Plus business at all levels of the housing authority. Examples of such modifications are discussed in the next section of this chapter, and they usually require authorization by senior housing authority officials. But senior-level support was not easily forthcoming in the absence of consensus among the local housing authorities over the wisdom of assuming social welfare responsibilities through programs like Jobs-Plus. Some senior officials were likely to echo one writer's critical view of HUD's social welfare goals: "Given the problems with public housing, why are its goals expanding?"[7] The executive director of the Chattanooga Housing Authority objected to his agency's involvement with Jobs-Plus (which began before his tenure), insisting that social service programs can

[6] Xavier de Souza Briggs, personal communication.
[7] Husock, 1997.

divert limited housing authority resources from the core mission of providing affordable housing for the poor and from critical property management and security responsibilities.[8]

Housing Authority Adaptations for Jobs-Plus

A deputy executive director of one site's housing authority observed: "Over the next five years, the housing authority will need more flexibility in the way it operates in order to survive. Bureaucratic rules prohibit things from being done." Senior housing authority officials recognized that it would be difficult to get an innovative program like Jobs-Plus off the ground — and for the program to fulfill its promise — unless the housing authority could somehow insulate it from certain agency regulations and expedite approvals for its requests. With these concerns in mind, the housing authorities in several sites took special steps to circumvent some of the bureaucratic barriers presented by the agency's normal operating procedures and internal politics concerning its social welfare role. It is unclear yet whether or not these adjustments represent significant changes in agency practice beyond accommodating Jobs-Plus. But the following examples do highlight the vital importance of having a supportive executive director and a politically savvy project director to steer Jobs-Plus proposals through this agency and to secure the needed accommodations.

Waiving Requirements and "Fast-Tracking" Decisions

At some sites, the executive director or other senior housing authority officials went out of their way to help Jobs-Plus by waiving agency regulations and repeatedly intervening to urge staff to "fast-track" Jobs-Plus business, assigning it a higher priority and freeing up staff for additional responsibilities. For example, in Dayton, a problem arose after the collaborative had prepared a job description and salary level for the Jobs-Plus project director position. Because this description did not fit within any of the housing authority's existing job categories, the agency's Human Resources Division changed the description to comply with existing categories. In doing so, however, it altered the meaning in a way that the collaborative's Steering Committee found unacceptable. Therefore, the Steering Committee members brought the matter to the attention of the executive director and explained why they preferred the original wording. In response, he not only reinstated the original job description but also instructed the director of the Resident Programs Division, who had been handling the bulk of Jobs-Plus's initial organizing responsibilities, to work with Human Resources and find a way to address the program's remaining staffing needs quickly.

The executive director of the Seattle Housing Authority also worked actively to cut through red tape. This included having the Community Manager at Rainier Vista speed up

[8]Such views have significant support in public administration research findings, which can be summarized in the following recommendations: (1) Find a niche that the agency can fill better than any other; (2) avoid tasks that will dilute the agency's ability to perform its core mission; (3) avoid joint ventures in the likelihood that these will detract from the agency's ability to fulfill its mission; (4) avoid tasks that will alienate the agency's core constituency. See Selznick, 1957; Barnard, 1968; Halperin, 1974; Kaufman, 1977; Dickinson, 1997.

the renovations of Jobs-Plus facilities and the construction of fences around the yards of several residents' homes, which was necessary so that they could become in-home providers of child care. Comparable procurement issues had stalled or impeded the implementation of Jobs-Plus in some other sites, which lacked the forceful intervention of senior-level housing authority officials on behalf of the program.

Promoting Cooperation Across Housing Authority Divisions

Getting different divisions of the housing authority to cooperate in implementing Jobs-Plus was imperative, since the program involves so many "hybrid activities" that cut across divisional functions. As one expert notes, these divisions are normally "tough to coordinate, especially in a world of specialists trained to work categorically, not holistically."[9] Cooperation between the housing management staff and the Jobs-Plus staff was particularly important for the program's success in recruiting residents and addressing their needs. But this often meant overcoming deep professional differences between the Housing Management Division and the Resident Programs Division, where overall responsibility for Jobs-Plus was usually lodged.

Some matters, such as getting housing management staff to refer new residents to Jobs-Plus, could best be handled at the site level by efforts of the Jobs-Plus project director and staff to build good working relationships with the on-site management staff. In addition to including them as members of Jobs-Plus committees or inviting them to staff meetings, a project director emphasized the human touch: "Keep them in the loop about Jobs-Plus. Drop off plants or flowers or food once in a while when you go by and say, 'Hello.'"[10] Other matters, such as housing authority regulations concerning men who are not on the lease, were more intractable and required both the attention of senior officials to grant policy exceptions or make changes and the devolution of authority to permit frontline staff to make case-by-case determinations.

In Dayton, the executive director of the housing authority foresaw the need to foster systematic cooperation among agency divisions concerned with Jobs-Plus. Early in the planning stages of the program, he implemented a "site-based management structure" at DeSoto Bass Courts that delegated extensive discretion about maintenance and security issues to the on-site manager and staff. He then installed a new manager who understood resident outreach and who had his staff participate with the collaborative partners in orientations about Jobs-Plus and also had them join the Jobs-Plus staff in their door-to-door recruitment of residents. These actions were critical in paving the way for subsequent efforts of Jobs-Plus and management staff to integrate maintenance, rent collection, and security into a comprehensive program for employment, asset accumulation, and youth leadership. The two staffs have also worked together to prepare for Job-Plus's rent incentives component by setting up an escrow

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[9] Xavier de Souza Briggs, personal communication.

[10] In St. Paul, housing management staff at Mt. Airy Homes have consistently participated in resident orientations to Jobs-Plus, elaborating on the rent incentives component. In the early days of the program, they also participated in outreach and recruitment efforts — for instance, by speaking at Jobs-Plus meetings and inserting flyers into rent statements.

account program so that residents can directly invest a percentage of their paychecks into Individual Development Accounts.

Now the on-site housing management staff at DeSoto Bass Courts regularly attend both Jobs-Plus collaborative meetings and resident council meetings to discuss residents' problems and help the program develop appropriate services. They walk new residents over to the Jobs-Plus offices to register, and they refer tenants who have rent problems to Jobs-Plus for assistance. As one housing manager put it: "If a resident doesn't have a job, or lost one, we'll ask if they've been to Jobs-Plus. If not, we'll direct them there." A Jobs-Plus worker added: "We also go out with [management staff] to collect rents when there are problems. We try to work as a team." Security staff have similarly joined forces with the program, coordinating efforts with Jobs-Plus case managers and youth workers to address incidences of juvenile crime and thereby avoid initiating legal processes that call for the eviction of an entire family. As one security staff member explained:

> If I have a problem with a resident, I find out who their case manager is and talk to them. At other sites, there's no one like this to work with. . . . If a person here is in trouble, instead of doing an eviction, we'll direct them to Jobs-Plus. Jobs-Plus gives us a big other option to deal with problems. In other sites, we just go ahead and do an eviction. Here, we try to avoid getting to that stage.

The Jobs-Plus rent incentives have also created demands for the housing authority that transcend the functional capacities of any single division. They require a high degree of coordination not only among "downtown" divisions of the agency but also between these divisions and the on-site housing management and Jobs-Plus staff. Such coordination depends on housing authority personnel who can communicate across, and work with, the priorities, specialized practices, and politics of different divisional staff, both downtown and on-site.

In Seattle, the executive director at Rainier Vista outstationed a specific housing authority employee there for the express purpose of coordinating the implementation of the rent incentives. This coordinator points to the technical and political difficulties in translating a policy into a program:

> I think that on the management side, for them it is a real burden to implement every program SHA [Seattle Housing Authority] downtown thinks of. But if I'm here, I can help with files, and build a bridge between policy and management. There are a lot of details. We've been really delinquent in sending statement of residents' escrow accounts. . . . First it was hard finding a bank partner, and then there was inside fighting within the Finance Department. We've finally arranged it so that every three months residents will get an escrow statement, though initially we thought it would be every month.

It helps greatly that the coordinator brings to these division-spanning efforts 22 years of experience with the housing authority's Family Self-Sufficiency programs and is familiar with the intricacies and priorities both of their financial administration at the downtown offices and of their delivery on-site at various housing developments, including Rainier Vista. He has been an important ally for the Jobs-Plus project director in shepherding matters related to

the rent incentives through agency personnel downtown: "I knew what was going on there, knew the politics."

Transferring Jobs-Plus Funds and Management to Independent Entities

Jobs-Plus sites could benefit by having greater autonomy from the housing authority's procurement and personnel regulations than can be achieved through intermittent senior-level interventions alone. Several sites increasingly saw the value of disengaging Jobs-Plus from these constraints altogether, by reducing the housing authority's role as fiduciary agent and by channeling the funds it procures for Jobs-Plus to a nonprofit organization to administer.

The housing authority in Dayton has taken this strategy furthest. It created a 501(c)3 organization, called Sankofa, as a nonprofit arm to replace its Resident Economic Opportunities Division. This action was intended specifically to free programs like Jobs-Plus from many of the procurement obstacles that they typically face. Sankofa became completely independent of the housing authority in 2001, leaving the programs it administers free to seek funding that is off-limits to the housing authority while retaining access to the agency's funding in its role as a preferred service vendor.

In St. Paul, the housing authority has allocated funds for hiring the new Jobs-Plus project director to the Wilder Foundation, making the foundation the employer of this staff member. While this decision helps circumvent potential hiring bottlenecks, it was also made because, in the opinion of one collaborative member, "there is so much mistrust of the housing authority by the residents that they would not agree to this person being employed by the PHA [Public Housing Authority]." Federal Welfare-to-Work grants earmarked by the JTPA agency in St. Paul for Jobs-Plus services are also funneled through the Wilder Foundation.[11]

The Support of the Housing Authority's Executive Director

The experiences of the Jobs-Plus sites underscore how critical the support of the executive director is to the success of Jobs-Plus. One example of how crucial this support can be comes from St. Paul. When delays were encountered in the early stages of the demonstration in getting HUD funding for the financial incentives component (see Chapter 2), the executive director stepped in and urged the housing authority's Board of Commissioner's to allocate funds to pay for the first year of rent incentives. These efforts were instrumental in helping to move the program forward and countering a growing cynicism among residents about whether the promises made to them about Jobs-Plus would be kept. The housing authority still operates within a highly centralized, top-down management system, and its executive director must understand and support the basic premises of Jobs-Plus — including the value of an expanded social welfare role for the agency. He or she must also signal approval of institutional adaptations to division administrators and must allocate the needed resources and

[11]The Wilder Foundation operates an extensive array of service programs in Minneapolis as well as its own Research and Evaluation Division.

personnel. Without such high-level support, Jobs-Plus programs can founder even in the face of strong collaborative commitment.

The support of the executive director may be enhanced — and leveraged by the Jobs-Plus collaborative — if the program is viewed as a high priority among members of the housing authority's board of commissioners (to whom the executive director reports) and among the housing development's resident leaders. Various project directors spoke of the value of familiarizing the commissioners with Jobs-Plus, such as by inviting them to visit the program and by regularly attending their meetings, especially when they are working on the annual plan for the agency. In Chattanooga, the collaborative's leverage was strengthened by virtue of the fact that both a housing authority representative and a resident representative were also on the board of commissioners. More generally, the executive director's need to have a cooperative relationship with resident leaders is another potential basis for securing his or her commitment to Jobs-Plus. As one project director put it, the executive director "can't afford to p-o the residents"; indeed, he capitalized on resident support to secure the executive director's cooperation when there was a danger that the housing authority would not follow through with its plan for rent incentives. In the eyes of agency officials, the residents "have legitimacy in representing their needs to the housing authority that the staff do not have."

The Project Director as Diplomat and Lobbyist Within the Housing Authority

The sites' project directors have played a critical role in expediting Jobs-Plus business within their local housing authority. They have to exercise considerable diplomatic skills and persistence in cultivating the support of the appropriate agency personnel, from the executive director and senior division heads and staff "downtown" to on-site management staff. For example, the project director of Dayton Jobs-Plus underscored the preliminary work she had to do to educate and cultivate the senior officials of the divisions involved in implementing the program's rent incentives component. It helped greatly that she was a consummate housing authority insider, the former head of the Resident Programs Division, and had extensive contacts at headquarters. Similarly, the on-site coordinator of William Mead Homes in Los Angeles was also assigned to Jobs-Plus from a high-level housing authority position. She drew on considerable diplomatic skills and connections with agency officials to recruit capable staff and acquire resources, often sidestepping the "budget and buy from within" culture of the housing authority. She was also savvy at getting the housing authority to match resources that she had solicited from other public and nonprofit agencies and from businesses in the community; in view of growing cutbacks for resident programs, she revitalized the collaborative for this purpose, and she was able to rejuvenate the program in a remarkably short period, when it was on the verge of collapse.[12]

It also must be noted that years of insider experience as a housing authority employee are not necessarily a requirement for a successful project director. Seattle's capable and suc-

[12]One potential problem requiring the project director's diplomacy that was particular to Jobs-Plus as a demonstration was resentment from other housing developments that felt unfairly "passed over" or from housing authority division heads who believed that Jobs-Plus was being unduly privileged with resources and policy accommodations.

cessful project director had no experience working with the housing authority prior to Jobs-Plus except as a consultant who wrote the ED/SS proposal for the program while in graduate school. His lack of history with the housing authority worked to his advantage in this case, giving him credibility with residents and with the Private Industry Council (PIC), both of whom had conflictual relationships with the housing authority. In addition to his exceptional administrative capacities, however, this project director had the full support of the executive director, who devolved extensive authority and resources to the program to encourage experimentation.

Conclusion

Because Jobs-Plus attempts to capitalize on "place" to increase employment levels and self-sufficiency among public housing residents, it therefore must engage the housing authority as a necessary party — and ideally an active partner — in its efforts. At the same time, however, the housing authority and the residents are the two collaborative partners with the most to gain or lose through Jobs-Plus. This chapter has shown how attempts by the housing authorities across the sites to support Jobs-Plus's experimental approach challenged fundamental institutional priorities and called for significant modifications of practices and procedures. Project directors had to invest considerable time and diplomatic skills to garner support for these changes at the appropriate housing authority levels. The willingness and capacity of the housing authorities to adapt have varied across sites, thereby affecting the speed of the program's implementation and its flexibility in meeting residents' needs. These variations reflect differences in the importance of Jobs-Plus to each locality and housing authority, the bureaucratic structures and politics of the local agency, and the strength of the collaborative's involvement with Jobs-Plus and leverage over the housing authority.

All the Jobs-Plus collaboratives chose the housing authority to be their lead agency. However, it may be feasible — and even advisable under some circumstances — to turn this role over to another agency when the housing authority senior staff are unlikely to support the program with the kind of commitment and resources it needs. Still, the centrality of the housing authority's role in Jobs-Plus cannot be avoided, and the support of top-level managers will always remain crucial to the program's successful implementation, whether or not the housing authority serves as the collaborative's lead agency.

Chapter 6

Involving Residents as Collaborative Partners

Introduction

By requiring public housing residents to be included as collaborative partners in the Jobs-Plus demonstration, the national designers signaled to the sites their conviction that resident involvement was critical to the program's success in achieving its employment objectives. In the words of one project director: "You need to build the support of the residents for the program. Without them, the program will have no participants for its services, no takers for its rent incentives, and no one to do the community supports for work." At the same time, however — exasperated by the seemingly endless process involved in building capacities and trust and making decisions democratically as collaborative partners — a resident exclaimed: "Residents want jobs, not collaboration!" These contrasting reactions are another manifestation of the tension between "process" and "product" goals confronted by the Jobs-Plus collaboratives. The residents were to play a critical role in building an employment program that they would want to use and that would help large numbers of them secure steady work; but the resident capacities that had to be cultivated and the social and political hurdles that had to be overcome to involve the residents were considerable. Indeed, the pace of capacity-building did not coincide with the pace that Jobs-Plus needed in order to make adequate progress toward its employment goals — the very objective that resident engagement was intended to promote.

This chapter examines how the process-product tension played out across the sites. It describes the types of efforts that were made to involve residents in meaningful and productive ways, the many and varied impediments that these efforts encountered, and the practices and conditions that led to more positive results. Overall, the chapter shows that it is important and feasible to engage residents as prominent and influential collaborative partners. But accomplishing this requires a willingness on the part of agency partners to give residents a voice over their services, a project director with the requisite skills and values for promoting resident engagement, and capacity-building efforts to help residents acquire the technical and administrative skills they need to inform and even help operate and oversee the program.

How Did Residents Contribute to Program Development?

The mandate of the national designers to involve residents as partners in Jobs-Plus shows the inspiration of public administrative reform efforts that emphasize the democratic value of public agencies' being more accountable to communities for the services they deliver or fund.

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Public agencies can provide services more responsively to community needs by involving residents with agency personnel in making program decisions and even delivering services.[1] Communities are *empowered* to the degree that residents acquire opportunities and capacities to engage in planning and problem-solving with public agencies and to the degree that they reasonably expect their efforts to impact staff decisions and lead to program improvements. The national designers of Jobs-Plus recognized that resident leaders had "insider knowledge" of their housing developments that was needed in order to design a program that would be appealing and useful to a broad range of residents. As a resident leader at one site emphasized: "We're grown-ups here. How can you tell us how to live? You need to know how to help us!" The resident leaders also had the authority to elicit broad resident support for the program — or to inspire widespread rejection of it, which could shut it down altogether. By designating residents as collaborative partners, Jobs-Plus looked to them to contribute their local knowledge and authority in shaping the program's direction and features, alongside their agency counterparts. Venues for doing so subsequently included, but were not limited to, formal representative bodies on the collaborative. It was hoped that collaborative participation would also help foster the leadership and managerial skills that residents needed in order to assume greater responsibility for sustaining the program in their housing developments.[2]

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[1]A range of practical and theoretical literature calls for the participation of community stakeholders in undertaking public administrative reform and community development initiatives (Barzelay, 1992; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Freire, 1997; Aspen Institute, 1997). But this chapter draws heavily on the analytical categories and research of deliberative democracy theorists, as well as critical legal theorists, whose work is particularly relevant to the Jobs-Plus approach and the issues of resident involvement in an employment initiative. These theorists seek to expand the ways that communities can make public agencies more accountable for the services they provide by working directly with agency staff in designing and monitoring public services. These theorists regard such cooperative problem-solving as vital and practical forms of direct civic participation and community empowerment in a democratic society. Their research points to deliberative venues used, for example, by parents and school and health officials in making decisions cooperatively about special education in Wisconsin public schools (Handler, 1988); by AIDS activists in regulatory negotiations with pharmaceutical companies and federal agencies over AIDS treatment research (Freeman, 1995); and by local citizens in Chicago in working with municipal officials to implement community policing and local school reforms (Fung, 1998, 2000).

[2]Fung (2000) described how the local "beat cops" of the Chicago Police Department have been working with residents since 1995 in community policing arrangements to identify and address local sources of crime and disorder. This partnership assumes that local citizens "possess superior knowledge of the problems in their neighborhoods and might have different priorities even when both were equally well informed. Partnerships might also be more effective because police and neighborhood residents have different capacities and resources. Finally, more than a few public safety and police-reform activists thought that bringing citizens closer to sworn officers would enable them to better monitor police activities and hold them accountable for doing their jobs" (pp. 3-4). Each district of Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) held regular "beat meetings" where residents cooperatively identified and prioritized problems and developed strategies for dealing with them and then continued to assess and modify these strategies as they were implemented.

Examples of Resident Involvement

Across the sites, residents did indeed contribute to program development in important ways. For example, residents at Gilmor Homes in Baltimore helped to design outreach plans for a collaborative partner that was offering to bring health services to the program. The Vision for Health Consortium (VHC) was initially contracted with to address the site's high rate of drug use, which prevented many residents from securing and keeping jobs. But the resident council advised VHC that very few residents would seek its drug treatment services if they were provided up front. Mothers, for instance, feared losing custody of their children if treatment required residents to leave the premises. So VHC instead designed an outreach plan that promoted family health care for the entire development and that included referrals to drug treatment centers as one element of its services.

This strategy of engaging residents in program design has been particularly helpful in gearing services to residents' needs in ethnically and culturally diverse sites and in engaging the "hard-to-serve," who are unlikely to seek out Jobs-Plus's services (this group includes victims of domestic violence, ex-felons, and undocumented immigrants).[1] For example, at Rainier Vista in Seattle, where residents speak more than 22 languages, the residents' Rainier Vista Leadership Team has spearheaded the design of multicultural curriculum materials used by the program. These include an interactive PowerPoint presentation in multiple languages depicting people of different ethnic backgrounds in interview and employment situations, to help prepare residents for job search and workplace interactions. The leadership team received a grant from the City of Seattle to develop and publish such tools for use by workforce development providers. The importance of these efforts was poignantly underscored when the employment services of a successful local vendor and collaborative member foundered at Rainier Vista because its New Age emphasis on group sharing and personal effectiveness by putting aside "personal baggage from the past" met with resistance from the Southeast Asian and East African residents. These refugees from war-torn regions needed opportunities to deal with past traumas in order to move forward with their lives; to them, the notion of confronting or sharing confidences publicly with strangers is ill-mannered, disagreeable, and selfish.

Residents in many sites also played a critical part in the design and implementation of the program's rent incentives component. They attended rent incentives committee meetings or task forces, including technical assistance sessions provided by MDRC. In St. Paul, the members of the Resident Leadership Team surveyed residents in the community to find out what incentives would appeal to them, and a number of their suggestions directly influenced the site's plan. As one example, residents wanted a reward for job retention, so the plan includes a provision for families to receive one month of free rent per year, provided that at least one adult family member had worked every month of the previous year.

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[1]The housing authority of Los Angeles County, unlike those of the other demonstration sites, permits undocumented aliens to hold leases in its developments as long as a member of the household is a legal U.S. resident.

Residents in many sites have participated in hiring Jobs-Plus staff, particularly the project director and such core service delivery positions as case managers and job developers, including those colocated on-site by public or nonprofit service agencies. The residents' role involved identifying staffing needs, composing job descriptions, and conducting interviews. This was a major departure from the standard personnel practices of most agencies involved with Jobs-Plus. Resident input and even approval have also been sought across sites in selecting MDRC's on-site researchers and technical assistance consultants.

Finally, residents have most directly and tangibly shaped program services as staff members and interns at Jobs-Plus and at partner agencies on the collaborative. With residents on staff, Jobs-Plus has had ready access to a "resident perspective" on service delivery, while signaling to the community that the program is for residents' benefit, to be operated by them as much as possible. Residents have been employed in such key positions as community organizers, intake specialists who help case managers to screen and assess participants, and job coaches who assist the job developer with skills assessment, training, and job search.

Baltimore Jobs-Plus: An Example of Using Residents as Staff

Baltimore Jobs-Plus has made the most strategic use of resident staff for program development. For instance, the resident aides at the Vision for Health Consortium were well-respected leaders of the Gilmor Homes community. "I'm like their mother, grandmother, aunt, sister," said one of them. She emphasized that resident aides created a "comfort zone" for people who would otherwise be reluctant to come forward with substance abuse or domestic violence problems: "Residents come to us off-the-record for advice, like advice on who's for real." This kind of resident involvement was a major contribution to Baltimore Jobs-Plus, because health issues were critical barriers to employment at Gilmor Homes. These resident aides knew how to explain technical procedures and complicated questions on forms in everyday terms that their neighbors could grasp quickly and confidently.

The success of the program's outreach and follow-up efforts in Baltimore, as at other Jobs-Plus sites, has really depended on the resident staff's familiarity with locations in the development or neighborhood where residents with various needs were to be found — and on their willingness to "hang out" and be accessible at those locations, instead of keeping to program offices and service hours. Resident staff have kept the program alerted to the movement of individuals through jobs and services. A resident aide and recovering addict who completed treatment through the Vision for Health Consortium now helps provide essential post-treatment care to other residents who are trying to stay "clean":

> [M]ost of the time, actually, we're out just about every day. And a lot of the residents passing by . . . recognize us through Jobs-Plus. They'll stop you at the store, walking anywhere. . . . I've been doing a lot of walking, but a lot have actually come to my home. Knock on my door. I work some days from the house. Like I said, a lot of them just need someone to talk to. . . . Some of the younger guys, we actually just talk to them. They stand on the corner. . . . A lot of them have gone; we've gotten them through the treatment. . . . We always have peo-

> ple come back . . . and let us know where they [are] at today. You know, from point A to point B, and what they [are] doing to stay on that path.

The resident aides have exercised initiative and creativity in proposing new services in response to needs that their neighbors have communicated to them. This includes health care services specifically for the men in the development, for which the aides conducted a door-to-door needs assessment that elicited extensive resident participation.

Baltimore Jobs-Plus has also arranged with collaborative partners to use funds allocated to the program to hire residents for supervised work experience positions off-site, in the partner agencies' offices. Jobs-Plus staff have relied on these residents' "insider information" about agency services, and about the experiences of other residents in using them, to track individuals across off-site services and to monitor their quality. The presence of residents in partner agencies has also helped strengthen the bonds between these agencies and Jobs-Plus.

What Does It Take to Involve Residents in Ways That Are Inclusive and Productive?

Although the contributions of residents in shaping and implementing Jobs-Plus have been real and substantial, it has not been easy to involve residents in program development. As this section shows, considerable efforts had to be made to ensure that residents were broadly represented in collaborative discussions and that residents received capacity-building assistance to undertake their roles as collaborative partners and program staff.

Furthermore, efforts to involve the residents were complicated by confusion, fueled by MDRC's early technical assistance, over the extent to which Jobs-Plus — in addition to raising employer levels — should be a vehicle for fostering resident leadership and control of services in the community.[4] Resident partnership as a way to provide services that are more responsive to residents' needs depends heavily on the willingness of the partner agencies and Jobs-Plus staff to involve residents in service decisions. During the design stages of the demonstration, MDRC staff and consultants had varying philosophical views over how much autonomy and power the residents needed vis-à-vis the agencies and staff in order to exercise this role over a community-based employment initiative. Terms like "resident empowerment" to be "equal partners" in building "resident-driven programs" were widely used in MDRC's early literature and technical assistance.[5] But there was disagreement over

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[4]See Sviridoff and Ryan, 1996; McKnight, 1995; Freire, 1997; Aspen Institute, 1997; Fung, 1998, 2000. These ideas are consistent with research that discusses the relationship between efforts to involve clients in program development and assessment and clients' strengthened perceptions of personal and social efficacy (Bandura, 1997) in their dealings with public agencies or in their willingness to participate in PTA meetings or other civic affairs, as in the case of clients of Head Start programs (Soss, 1999) or of the Center for Employment Training (CET) welfare-to-work programs (Kato, 1999).

[5]The national designers had been open-ended about the specific forms that resident involvement as partners should take so that the collaboratives could design roles that were suited to the collaborative composition, program needs, and resident strengths of each locality.

their meaning. Would empowerment, as discussed earlier, consist of opportunities for residents to engage in goal-setting and problem-solving with public agencies with the reasonable expectation that such involvement would impact staff decisions and program features? Or would empowerment, as some insisted, also mean that residents would have management authority over the program and the discretion to set the collaborative agenda and pursue concerns that were not necessarily related to Jobs-Plus and its employment goals?[6] The ambiguity resulting from this debate created considerable confusion among the collaboratives as they struggled to interpret and implement the principle of resident involvement.

A site representative later observed that the residents who got involved with Jobs-Plus at most sites simply wanted some assurance that their concerns were as likely to be heard and acted on as those of the partner agencies. They looked to Jobs-Plus for help with employment in their housing development but were not necessarily interested in running the collaborative and the program. But MDRC inadvertently heightened expectations at some sites about the authority that residents would have over Jobs-Plus and the concerns that they could pursue through the collaborative. Since these concerns were usually grievances against the housing authority, Jobs-Plus aggravated tensions between the residents and the housing authority at some sites. All this risked distracting collaborative and program attention from moving forward on Jobs-Plus's employment goals. These and other problems underscored and exacerbated the inherent tensions and trade-offs that exist between "inclusiveness" and "productivity" when engaging community stakeholders at the planning table, particularly while operating under pressing timelines to achieve employment goals.

Adequate Resident Representation

The collaboratives needed to find appropriate opportunities for residents to contribute their ideas and help make decisions for the program. They first looked to *formal governance structures* — full collaborative, the steering committee, and issue-based subcommittees — as vehicles for residents to do so. As discussed in Chapter 3, formal governance structures are venues where important issues can be brought to the attention of all members and where decision-making processes are explicit, negotiable, and binding on everyone.[7] Theoretically, formal structures should have worked to the advantage of residents, who lacked access to the professional networks and informal exchanges through which the partner agencies routinely conducted business.[7] By their attendance at meetings and participation on committees, residents had opportunities to raise their concerns; develop ways for the program to address these; and contest, challenge, or "bless" any decisions that were being made. Furthermore,

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[6]This view reflects the importance placed by various community-based development approaches on residents — instead of government agencies, businesses, and so on — having the authority to specify the goals and priorities of initiatives for their communities as an essential element of their empowerment. Some also look to opportunities for residents to work in partnership with public service providers as a way for residents of marginal "client communities" to acquire the skills and resources needed to assume the management and even the ownership of public services themselves (McKnight, 1995; Freire, 1997; Aspen Institute, 1997).

[7]Bardach, 1998.

consensus decisionmaking rather than majority vote was preferred by the collaboratives as a way to ensure that residents' perspectives would count as much as those of other partners.

It is noteworthy, however, that as more and more residents secured employment, it became more difficult for them to participate in collaborative meetings. Indeed, resident involvement as collaborative partners was in some ways a "victim" of the program's success. It also did not help that many of the collaboratives continued to hold meetings off-site, at agency offices, during regular workday hours. These conditions might have been conducive to agency representatives but not to working residents, who lacked the transportation, leave time, and child care arrangements to attend.

Resident delegates to the collaboratives were typically the leaders of the resident councils,[8] although the sites also maintained an open policy for other residents to participate in collaborative meetings. Resident councils had the public standing and connections to resident networks in their developments that Jobs-Plus needed in order to access residents' opinions and support. Thus, during the initial program design phase, resident council members in many sites helped the collaboratives conduct surveys of residents' needs, assets, and opinions about program design issues. In addition, throughout the demonstration period, the regular meetings of the resident councils, which are open to the agenda items and attendance of the entire housing development, have been used to relay information about Jobs-Plus to other residents and for the collaborative partners and program staff to float proposals as "trial balloons" to test residents' responses and cultivate their support for new programmatic ideas.

But the Jobs-Plus sites found that the resident councils were not adequate vehicles for securing input from a broad cross-section of the resident communities, whose memberships usually were more diverse than the councils in age, gender, race, and ethnicity. For example, the resident communities of the two Jobs-Plus sites in Los Angeles and especially of the sites in St. Paul and Seattle include many different cultural and ethnic groups, and large numbers of residents do not speak English. The other four sites — Baltimore, Chattanooga, Cleveland, and Dayton — were relatively homogenous in terms of race and ethnicity when Jobs-Plus was implemented, but the women who dominated their resident councils did not reflect the substantial number of men and younger residents in the developments. The lack of accurate representation in the racially and ethnically diverse sites can be traced largely to the fact that the housing developments had historically served very different populations; but the composition of their resident councils had not kept pace with changes in the composition of their

[8]A resident council is an organization of public housing residents officially recognized by the housing authority for the purpose of improving the quality of life at the developments and participating in the overall mission of public housing. Some resident councils have secured funds from HUD (for example, grants under the Tenant Opportunity Program, or TOPS) and private foundations or contracts from the housing authority to undertake various management activities, such as ground maintenance. In order to do so, the resident council must approve a Resident Management Corporation (RMC) that is legally incorporated as a nonprofit organization to administer these funds or contracts. For example, the resident council of Harriet Tubman Homes in Chattanooga is also its RMC, which manages funds from local foundations to promote resident entrepreneurship.

resident communities. For example, resident council members in St. Paul were primarily African-American, while in Seattle they were largely white and recipients of disability benefits — even though waves of new immigration into these areas had radically changed the ethnic composition of the developments, introducing other ethnic groups, mainly Southeast Asians and Africans.[9]

Expanding Formal Resident Representation and Venues for Input

The collaboratives of some sites took steps to involve a broader representation of the resident community. In St. Paul, for example, the largely African-American officers of the resident council helped get residents from different cultural groups to join a special Resident Leadership Team (RLT) for Jobs-Plus, and served on this team with them. The collaboratives in Seattle and St. Paul provided translation services for non-English-speaking residents to make sure that all residents were informed about Jobs-Plus and were given an opportunity to contribute their ideas, during collaborative and resident council meetings in Seattle, and during the early organizing meetings in St. Paul.

Seattle Jobs-Plus stands out for its efforts to revamp the resident council through regularly held elections. Resident leaders sponsored organizing drives to increase their neighbors' knowledge and interest in resident management and Jobs-Plus, and they recruited candidates from the multiple ethnic groups in the development for seats on the newly constituted Rainier Vista Leadership Team (RVLT). The existing resident leadership was committed to this, saying that they could not legitimately speak for all the residents. The RVLT is now composed of thirteen members, roughly reflecting the composition of Rainier Vista households with respect to ethnic and national origin; it includes three African-Americans (one man and two women), two East Africans (one woman and one man), two Cambodian women, two Vietnamese men, and four white women. As one collaborative partner put it: "Now we have working people, we have multilingual people, we have men and women, different degrees, backgrounds and education and so on . . . it's expanding and changing."

The Problem of Entrenched Resident Leadership

Jobs-Plus's collaborative approach implicitly assumes that the established resident leaders will share the program's democratic vision of broad resident input and leadership from

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[9]Similarly, the composition of the resident councils in Los Angeles was a legacy of the racial segregation imposed on these developments by the local housing authority as a way to address the violent conflicts between race-based gangs that had previously lived side-by-side in the developments. But desegregation prompted by a class action lawsuit has been changing the composition of these developments. Yet the resident council of Imperial Courts is still composed of African-Americans, even though Latinos make up about 25 percent of the population; and the resident council of William Mead Homes is primarily Latino, even though African-Americans and Asians now each make up about 10 percent of the population. Residents make a distinction not only among racial groups but also between residents who are "American-born" and "foreign-born." In order for each group within the community to accept the resident leaders in Jobs-Plus as legitimate, the collaboratives had to find ways to solicit the participation and address the needs of residents from all these groups.

across the development. But this has not always been the case. Like other attempts to devolve policy decisions to local actors and to expand popular participation, Jobs-Plus's efforts to engage residents as partners were vulnerable to potential domination by powerful persons or factions in the housing development.[10] At the few developments where resident leadership was most established, it was concentrated in a handful of residents who were not always disposed to sharing their power. Since these residents had considerable influence over their developments and could undercut Jobs-Plus, the collaboratives had to walk a fine line trying to accommodate them without compromising the objectives of the program. The influence of such residents over the distribution of resources and jobs allocated to Jobs-Plus can make the program vulnerable to cronyism; indeed, future decisions to locate the program in a particular development need to consider whether the power of existing resident leadership might compromise its integrity.

This did happen in one site, where a former resident council leader had been very successful in negotiating with the housing authority for services and jobs for residents on construction projects in the development. This leader introduced the first candidate for the project director position to the collaborative's executive director, and the leader's blessing was critical for the candidate's selection. Such in-depth involvement with Jobs-Plus proved to be problematic, however, due to the resident leader's status as a former member of the local gang; the leader's authority over the development was derived from these gang links. Consequently, the leader recruited volunteers for Jobs-Plus activities from gang ranks and steered resources that the housing authority had made available to Jobs-Plus — from courtesy passes for recreation parks to positions as Jobs-Plus staff — to gang members, as patronage perks. Many residents began to avoid Jobs-Plus, viewing it as a gang-affiliated program. Efforts by the project director to distance the program from this leader alienated the gang members, who undermined the program's ability to function effectively and safely in the development. Serious incidences of retaliatory vandalism erupted, forcing the housing authority to completely reconstitute Jobs-Plus with a new project director and staff. The new project director succeeded in reviving the program and pursuing a neutral, hands-off stance toward the gangs at the development, but this was possible primarily because the fatal illness and death of the resident leader created a leadership vacuum.

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[10]James Madison, in *The Federalist*, No. 10 (1937), warned that efforts to promote direct democracy by moving decisionmaking for local affairs from higher-level government bodies to groups of local citizens will only invite the "mischiefs of factions." Individuals or groups with the most power or strongest interests in participating will likely dominate the process or subject it to paralyzing conflict. This skeptical view of direct, local political participation has had a profound influence on democratic political thought and practice in the United States, and it is discussed in such contemporary works as Jane Mansbridge's *Beyond Adversary Democracy* (1980) and John Gastil's *Democracy in Small Groups: Participation, Decision Making and Communication* (1993).

Overcoming Adversarial Relations Between Residents and the Housing Authority

Jobs-Plus had a contentious time at some sites trying to bring residents and the housing authority together to work as collaborative partners. As noted earlier, the relationship between public housing residents and the housing authority is the inherently unequal and often adversarial one of landlord to tenant. At some sites, the history of distrust between the two discouraged collegial information-sharing and problem-solving. The housing authority had inordinate leverage because of its access to critical and intimate aspects of the residents' lives. And the residents at most sites were accustomed to approaching the housing authority as petitioners, not as partners or even customers. Where resident leadership prior to Jobs-Plus had been most active and strong, this power was often exercised in battles with the housing authority.

The landlord-tenant relationship was further complicated during the program's design phase by confusion about the priority to be given to leadership development and resident management of Jobs-Plus as possible goals and key features of empowerment. As discussed earlier, MDRC's early literature and technical assistance often conveyed this message, heightening residents' expectations about their management authority over Jobs-Plus. At some sites, residents saw Jobs-Plus as a political opening to challenge housing management policies that had been a source of long-standing conflict, such as penalties for harboring family members with a felony record. Collaborative discussions about Jobs-Plus often got sidetracked by rancorous exchanges about such policies or about management's unresponsiveness to residents' requests for repair and maintenance requests.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the housing authority usually regarded its legal responsibilities as the landlord and fiduciary agent for Jobs-Plus as meaning that most decisions about the facilities and funds under its management were "off-limits" to its collaborative partners — agencies and residents alike — particularly in the effort to comply with strict accountability requirements for federal funding. While housing authorities may view this as good management practice, residents have sometimes interpreted such a stance as evidence of the housing authority's resistance to cede *substantive* authority and responsibility for Jobs-Plus to the residents. Tensions have also emerged when residents have been granted some fiscal authority, only to see it withdrawn when, from the perspective of the housing authority, they have not executed it properly. For instance, in St. Paul, the housing authority had allocated to the resident council a checking account for use in covering their stipends and the child care costs they incurred for participation in collaborative meetings. Problems occurred in the management of these funds, including an overexpenditure of the initial account balance and an incident in which a resident council member signed a check to herself for a legitimate expense, not knowing that this was contrary to housing authority regulations and legal practices in dealing with external funds. In response, the housing authority revoked the right of the residents to manage this checking account, a decision that it explained at a collaborative meeting but that was made unilaterally prior to the meeting. Some residents complained that the housing authority should have given residents another chance and offered more guid-

ance and training on the proper management of those funds. Some resident leaders recall this incident with bitterness to this day.

The Project Director as Mediator and Guarantor of Resident Engagement

With Jobs-Plus sometimes becoming a battleground for conflicts between residents and the housing authority, it became important for the project director to be able to mediate between them effectively. Since all but one of the project directors were housing authority employees, they had contacts with the agency's staff and officials and were familiar with its policies and practices. The project directors advocated for residents' concerns with housing authority officials, while interpreting agency priorities and regulations in a manner that residents could comprehend, if not always accept.

The project directors also had a critical role in maintaining resident engagement in the decisionmaking process for Jobs-Plus. As discussed in Chapter 3, they had to become the champions and protectors of residents' voices not only in formal meetings of the collaborative partners but also in informal interactions. At sites where residents were most satisfied with their role as partners, the project directors had made considerable efforts to develop opportunities for residents to contribute their ideas and had met routinely with them on a formal and informal basis to keep them "in the loop" about program development and to solicit their views. Most important, these project directors had worked to ensure that residents' views were acted on by the appropriate parties, so that their involvement truly empowered residents to shape the program. This required of the project director a combination of community-building instincts, sound diplomatic and administrative skills, and a commitment to the principles of collaboration.

For instance, in Seattle, helping the residents to work effectively with one another and their collaborative partners consumed many of the project director's workday hours and even weekends during the early phases of Jobs-Plus. He talked about fielding "knock-down screaming matches" among Rainier Vista Leadership Team (RVLT) members as they struggled with new roles and learned to resolve their differences. In contrast, compared with the experiences of the other Jobs-Plus sites, the reliance of St. Paul Jobs-Plus on a "shared leadership" approach until summer 2000 may have deprived that site of a project director who could have mediated disputes between the residents and the housing authority, assured the collaborative partners that their concerns and decisions were being addressed by the one responsible for day-to-day program management, and helped the collaborative move more quickly beyond trust-building and process concerns to program development issues.

Building Residents' Capacity to Contribute to Collaborative Decisionmaking and Program Operations

Although Jobs-Plus looked to the residents for help in providing a program that could raise employment levels in the housing development, the residents generally needed capacity-building assistance to fulfill this role. For most residents, Jobs-Plus represented the first opportunity to be at the decisionmaking table with local power brokers and agency officials.

A resident leader of Baltimore Jobs-Plus emphasized the isolation that left residents ill-prepared for this role:

> You know, some people have some real sheltered lives . . . come outside, wash, clean, go back in the house. As far as going out and meeting people, you know, like me meeting you, not knowing what to say to you, because we never met people in important places before. To let you know what we really want . . . to ask you to help us, to make us a better human being.

In addition, once at the decisionmaking table, residents sometimes faced an exclusive and formidable barrier in the "communicative culture" of the agency representatives — the shared language, norms, knowledge, and informal networks that agency representatives used to do business with one another. But a public administrative reform expert emphasizes that community stakeholders like the Jobs-Plus residents are disadvantaged most by the fact that addressing such issues as social welfare, neighborhood safety, and education have increasingly become the domain of technical and legal expertise and professional services.[11] The residents generally lacked, for instance, the skills to read budgets, work plans, and service delivery charts and thus contribute to program development on an equal footing with agency representatives. As an agency representative said: "We didn't pay enough attention to money issues with residents. Money is a struggle and money is power. We need to communicate [better about] budgets and clarify control over money."[12]

Many residents were thus often reluctant to assert a statement in full collaborative meetings without being asked a direct question. As one observer noted, they would "back away from pressing a point if [they did not] receive support or if [their views were] contradicted." And when some expressed their dissatisfaction toward certain service approaches, they did so in vague and general terms and were unable to present viable alternatives. As a result, once residents identified a need, the professionals generally "took over" in identifying service responses. Residents worried that their partners could "woo them with fancy tables" and dazzle them into accepting the collaborative's plans. As one frustrated resident said of the expectation that residents should "drive" the program: "They talk about being resident-driven, but how can you drive or lead when you don't know what you're trying to drive or lead?"

Such experiences may have heightened feelings of marginalization and subordination that residents already harbored toward the agency representatives, and at some sites they appear to have prompted residents to accuse their partners of racial or class discrimination.[13] As one resident complained: "If you [residents] don't have a degree [the other partners] fig-

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[11]Fung (1998) cites democratic theorist Robert Dahl, who warned: "I am inclined to think that the long-run prospects for democracy are more seriously endangered by inequalities in resources, strategic positions, and bargaining strength that are derived not from economic position but from special knowledge" (p. 50).

[12]Swanson, 1999, p. 9.

[13]At most Jobs-Plus sites, the agency representatives, professional Jobs-Plus staff, and resident representatives were all ethnic minorities — mostly Latinos, African-Americans, and Southeast Asians — but differed in their educational backgrounds and income levels.

ure you don't know anything." At the same time, such accusations discouraged the agency representatives from challenging residents' views, for fear of being labeled as racist or elitist. A collaborative partner observed:

> There is a perception that residents can't be questioned without partners looking disrespectful, and the anxiety this tension causes can hinder the functioning of the collaborative. There's been an assumption that the professionals can always be questioned, but never the residents. It's not a safe environment to take risks.

At times, residents in some sites have resorted to advocacy tactics over more conciliatory approaches to advance their agenda. For instance, at one site this took the form of residents' "going on strike" against the collaborative, showing up in matching outfits to demonstrate their solidarity, and making confrontational statements to the partners in meetings. At other sites, the residents often looked to the behind-the-scenes support of the project director, the executive director of the housing authority, or some agency representative to promote their interests. One partner commented that residents "seem to need to go behind you to get someone else to support them rather than deal directly with you. . . . This doesn't show an understanding of what it really means to be empowered." Such conduct was actually in keeping with the need for "low-power" stakeholders to build an independent power base to gain acceptance as legitimate stakeholders, usually through advocacy tactics and coalition-building with other stakeholders.[14] But the institutional partners saw such actions for extracting concessions from a powerful adversary as unsuitable for doing business with a colleague, reinforcing their perception that the residents lacked the skills to conduct business in a "professional" manner. As an observer at one site commented:

> Even though the residents are becoming more vocal about their feelings, the angry and accusatory manner they use may be hard for the others to respond to. For the most part, the agency collaborators are polite to each other and don't accuse each other of lying, at least not publicly.

Capacity-Building Through Technical Assistance

In order to strengthen the capacity of residents to be effective collaborative partners and assume program responsibilities, the demonstration's national designers made provisions for the sites to receive technical assistance.[15] Initially, MDRC's technical assistance emphasized

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[14]Gricar and Brown, 1981; Gray, 1985.

[15]Fung (2000, p. 3) points to the extensive technical and procedural training that local citizens received to function effectively as members of the Local School Councils (LSCs) of the Chicago public school system. The LSCs (one for each of the 540 elementary and high schools of the Chicago public school system) were established in 1988 to promote school performance and reforms. These LSCs consist of six parents, two community representatives, two teachers, and the school principal, in addition to one nonvoting student in the high schools. The Chicago public school system devolved substantial authority and responsibilities to the LSCs for hiring and firing principals, spending discretionary funds, and developing and implementing strategic plans for improving the curriculum, instruction, physical plant, and administration. The school system there-

(continued)

political empowerment through leadership development and program management instead of equipping residents with the knowledge and skills needed to operate an employment program and contribute to program development discussions. For example, MDRC had The Empowerment Network (TEN) work with resident leaders on neighborhood organizing and community-building, with a focus on events planning, community outreach, peer counseling, and motivational workshops. TEN also conducted several cross-site workshops that were largely motivational and were generally well received, although they did not develop residents' programmatic skills or foster cross-site learning. One observer commented: "In my opinion, TEN runs the risk of building expectations among residents that may go unrealized and once again confirm many residents' view that you can't trust outsiders."

Fortunately, local and national service providers have subsequently helped the residents assume specific programmatic responsibilities that range from composing newsletters and intake forms to making budgets and conducting intake interviews. MDRC's operations representatives have played a particularly important role in providing ongoing guidance to the sites assigned to them, and in acting as trusted, neutral "boundary spanners" to mediate relationships among the collaborative partners. Indeed, outside agents enlisted by MDRC or the programs themselves have been essential in helping residents and their partners work through conflicts and build working relationships.[16] (Seattle Jobs-Plus is highlighted later in this chapter for its systematic use of technical assistance to build residents' capacities for program management.)

In the case of St. Paul Jobs-Plus, where tensions often ran high between the residents and partner agencies, the Wilder Foundation, a collaborative partner, provided a professional

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fore provided the parent and community representatives with extensive training — for example, about techniques for principal selection, school budgeting, curriculum development, and strategic planning — as well as procedures for negotiation and problem-solving.

[16]TEN was also a provider of such programmatic knowledge and skills to individual Jobs-Plus programs. For example, a TEN representative helped residents at Seattle Jobs-Plus learn about their rights and responsibilities as housing authority tenants and also to develop office management procedures. Another helped Baltimore Jobs-Plus plan an adult education program. And a TEN staff member helped Dayton Jobs-Plus prepare a grant proposal for funding through HUD's Tenant Opportunity Program (TOPS). The intensity of TEN's on-site assistance varied substantially. Some TEN representatives conducted one or two workshops in total, while others visited sites two or three days per month for up to a year. Many organizations have provided assistance to specific sites. The Chicago-based Project Match worked with the Baltimore site to adapt for use there a version of its employment-focused case management strategy used in Chicago public housing. Universities and community colleges in some sites have provided the collaboratives with technical assistance or planning help. In Baltimore, the University of Maryland conducted surveys of Gilmor Homes residents for planning purposes. In Chattanooga, the University of Tennessee provided some management training for Jobs-Plus staff, while consultants from the Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill helped Chattanooga's resident-owned Tubman Group develop a curriculum for "soft-skills" training (however, operational difficulties kept this enterprise from becoming a regular service vendor for Jobs-Plus). The Wilder Research Center in St. Paul helped design and analyze an asset-mapping survey of Mt. Airy Homes residents in the winter of 1998 for use in building community support for work strategies.

facilitator to moderate all collaborative meetings. The facilitator has changed only once and thus has become a trusted companion in the partners' efforts to communicate with one another. The foundation has provided additional assistance on an ad hoc basis as needs arose. For example, when residents refused to sign a memorandum of understanding because they did *not* understand its implications, the Wilder Foundation brought in a pro bono attorney to explain the document's language. Finally, the collaborative members have attended retreats to hash out their differences over fundamental program principles or processes. This has permitted them to use collaborative meetings as working sessions. In one case, for example, the collaborative held a retreat after the residents went "on strike" over the amount of the stipends they were paid to compensate them for the time they were spending on collaborative business. A resident said about the retreat that a "lot of emotions and words were brought up, like 'racism.' One retreat can't fix everything, but some healing happened around the Jobs-Plus program. A lot of hurt had happened." And an institutional partner described the process as "wrenching" but felt that it was very positive and helped the collaborative to build solidarity. These measures helped to improve relationships, and the collaborative and staff continue to meet regularly.

Capacity-Building Through Employment as Program Staff

Employment of residents as program staff and interns has been another important means of capacity-building. As they carry out their Jobs-Plus responsibilities, resident employees get "hands-on" experience with the ways in which agencies deliver services to their community, share in program development decisions at staff meetings, and interact daily with the project director and agency staff. This "insider knowledge" of agency priorities and practices enables them to propose recommendations for program improvements more effectively than before, as "outsiders" who could only voice complaints and make vague demands for "better service." As a former resident and now housing authority employee emphasized: "If you're not an electrician, you can't see how the doorbell rings." Resident staff have come to exercise considerable influence on the collaborative, because they usually have firsthand knowledge of program operations as well as a "resident perspective" that none of the other collaborative members possess.

Many Jobs-Plus sites have also looked to resident employment in Jobs-Plus as a way to underscore the program's commitment to the community and, thereby, to enhance its legitimacy. However, resident employment presents its own capacity-building challenges. For example, the Baltimore site representative described the considerable time that he, the project director, and professional staff had to dedicate to teaching resident staff to use the computer, design flyers and newsletters, fill out forms and charts, answer phones and greet people at the front desk, or undertake outreach activities in the development. The demands of such supervision increased as more and more of the most qualified residents secured employment off-site and were replaced by less qualified candidates. In addition, institutional partners expressed concerns about the ready access that residents in office positions had to confidential files about the other residents.

Contrasting Examples of Resident Involvement

This chapter has discussed various challenges of and strategies for engaging residents in the design and implementation of Jobs-Plus. To some extent, the differences in approaches across sites and over time within sites reflect different visions of resident engagement and empowerment. The experiences of Jobs-Plus in Chattanooga and Seattle help to illustrate some of these differences. They highlight, in particular, the possibilities, challenges, and capacity-building requirements of approaches to resident partnership that emphasize resident management of an employment program.

Chattanooga Jobs-Plus: Power with Limited Capacity-Building

From the outset, the Jobs-Plus collaborative in Chattanooga conferred on the resident leadership at Harriet Tubman Homes significant authority for the program. As discussed in Chapter 3, the majority of seats on the Governance Board were allocated to the residents, tipping decisionmaking in their favor. Indeed, the housing authority was selected as the lead agency for Jobs-Plus at the insistence of the resident representatives, who believed that the housing authority would be most accountable to the residents and most capable of changing housing policies. The housing authority had wanted to concede the lead role to the local Private Industry Council (PIC). The residents played a leading role in selecting the services that Jobs-Plus would offer, in retaining the service contracts in the office of the Resident Management Corporation (RMC), and in filling steering committee openings and staff positions. The residents were also guaranteed at least half of Jobs-Plus's staff positions, in the effort to make the program a truly resident-driven initiative.

However, a single leader and her supporters dominated the resident council at Harriet Tubman Homes. Unlike resident leaders at other sites, they came to Jobs-Plus with an independent power base of alliances with local politicians, foundations, and community service organizations, many of which were part of the Jobs-Plus collaborative. The remarkable resident council president was also a member of the board of commissioners for the local housing authority. Over the years preceding Jobs-Plus, these residents built their power base, in campaigns they spearheaded with a Muslim neighborhood organization and the local police that eliminated much of the drug traffic and violent crime in the neighborhood.[17] These same

[17]The resident leaders at Harriet Tubman Homes are credited with transforming the development. Ten years prior to Jobs-Plus, "Boone Heights," as the development used to be named, was known for its homicides, drug culture, and crime. It had the highest crime rates in Chattanooga. One city councilman wanted to have the development bulldozed, but the current resident council president led efforts of the residents to turn this situation around. Their efforts started with the symbolic renaming of the development. Now Harriet Tubman Homes has a "services row" of developments that house educational, health (including drug treatment), and cultural programs. Fences encircle yards to prevent the police and neighbors from parking or driving on the lawns, and they give residents a feeling of safety and privacy in their homes. Residents who are offered a transfer to another development stay in the community, and Harriet Tubman Homes has become a source of pride for those who have transformed it into a relatively peaceful, safe, and quiet place to live.

resident leaders and their supporters assumed the Jobs-Plus Governance Board seats and the staff positions designated for residents.

The focus of this site on resident empowerment through formal control of the program was so strong that employment was often in danger of being lost as the primary objective of Jobs-Plus and the measure of its success. The project director preferred to call Jobs-Plus a "community-based movement" rather than an employment program. But the residents needed far more preparation than they received to assume the staff and management responsibilities they were given. With such a high percentage of residents required for staff positions, residents were undertaking major case management and job placement responsibilities for which they had little education and professional training. Furthermore, the other residents in the development expressed concerns about the access that resident staff had to their confidential files. The partner agencies also supported various entrepreneurial efforts of the resident council. For instance, they provided the council with a van to transport residents to jobs and employment-related activities; but this and other contributions were not accompanied by efforts to prepare and train the residents (in the case of the van, for example, to acquire the special licenses and upkeep skills needed to operate and maintain such a vehicle). Jobs-Plus therefore ended up assuming such responsibilities. The project director had to dedicate much of his time to training and supervising the resident staff or to performing their responsibilities himself. These factors contributed over time to the program's poor performance, as resident recruitment and job placements came to a standstill.

The current MDRC-assisted effort to reconstitute the program is focused on raising its employment figures and seeks to professionalize the services and build staff capacities for this purpose. Resident staff positions are being reconfigured to capitalize on residents' strengths in community outreach and employment follow-up. Capacity-building efforts also include visits of the staff to Dayton Jobs-Plus for training. The program in Dayton is distinguished by a highly capable professional staff and a strong project director who insists on employing resident staff only when doing so will not compromise the professional quality of the services, and only in positions for which there are qualified residents.[18]

Seattle Jobs-Plus: Capacity-Building for Program Management

Seattle Jobs-Plus offers a valuable model for transferring significant responsibilities and authority to residents in a way that enhances, and does not undercut, the quality of the program's services and its ability to meet employment objectives. The project director embraced the notion that Jobs-Plus should eventually be under resident management as a resident-

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[18]While supportive of some resident employment on-site, the project director in Dayton also stresses the importance of encouraging residents to seek employment off-site in order to expose them to "real-world" working conditions, especially in the private sector, and to move them out of the insulated world of the housing development. This refers to the situation in public housing where residents have come to rely on an extensive network of relationships and "off-the-books" services in their housing development for getting by on public assistance. A resident at another site has called this "community supports for welfare" that has poorly prepared many residents for life "outside" in legitimate employment and civic participation.

driven initiative. But he recognized from the outset that considerable time and resources would be needed to prepare the residents for these responsibilities and also to meet employment goals. He therefore worked with the residents to identify and assume these responsibilities through several steps.

First of all, the existing resident leaders at Rainier Vista, unlike some leaders at other sites, opened their ranks to the many ethnic and age groups in the development. These residents were willing to share power, and they drew on the technical assistance they received on community organizing to help them recruit candidates and voters from these groups. The newly constituted Rainier Vista Leadership Team (RVLT) was then incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit entity to legally assume managerial responsibilities for the program.[19]

Second, the project director and the RVLT carved out together a narrowly specified, but meaningful and significant, set of managerial responsibilities for Jobs-Plus, namely, administering the Rainier Vista Job Resource Center, where many of the on-site program services are housed.[20] This was in stark contrast to the vague, wide-open notion of a resident-driven program that inflated and frustrated residents' expectations at some other sites. The RVLT had to raise funds for the resource center and administer its service contracts, requiring the RVLT to write grant proposals, hire and supervise vendors, manage accounts, and produce funding reports. The RVLT succeeded in acquiring a $200,000 TOPS grant from HUD, and it negotiated several service contracts, including one for a job coach with a local service provider. Two RVLT members had to co-sign all checks for payments to the contract recipients.

Third, the RVLT received extensive technical assistance incrementally to build specific capacities that residents needed to carry out these managerial responsibilities. This was in contrast to the generic community-building or leadership workshops that residents were initially given at other sites that did not equip them to assume specific managerial or programmatic responsibilities. The RVLT learned, for example, to plan and run meetings and events, promote attendance, develop and manage a budget and business plan, enter into contracts with service providers, write grant proposals, conduct business as a board, implement fair collective decisionmaking procedures, and resolve disputes. The RVLT also hired a professional manager to assist with the complex legal requirements of administering external funds. Accountable to the RVLT as an employee, this manager has helped Rainier Vista's residents avoid the financial irregularities that inadvertently occurred in some other sites.

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[19]The resident leadership at Rainier Vista had had an experience prior to Jobs-Plus in the 1990s, mobilizing to secure more storage space for the residential units, and had received some outside organizing assistance for this effort. But they made no further attempts to build on this achievement. Indeed, by the time Jobs-Plus was being considered for the development, the Resident Management Corporation was meeting sporadically, with only three or four residents in attendance.

[20]The Rainier Vista Job Resource Center houses several Jobs-Plus staff as well as a modern computer center connected to a network. Here residents can use computer tutorials, access news on the Internet, and attend classes (for example, ESL and soft-skills training). The Job Resource Center is the home of the popular "paperwork nights," at which residents can get help filling out complicated forms.

These responsibilities, resources, and skills also gave residents confidence and leverage at the collaborative table. Indeed, a resource center staff member under contract with the RVLT emphasized that the team has developed an independent identity and sense of ownership over the program. It is now asking staff to answer the phone with "Rainier Vista Job Resource Center" instead of "Jobs-Plus." Its record of programmatic accomplishments has secured the RVLT a leading role in the planning and implementation of HOPE VI at Rainier Vista, and the Seattle Housing Authority is touting the residents' role in the program as a model for engaging public housing residents to implement initiatives and foster civic life at the agency's other developments.

The project director insisted, however, that substantial and ongoing resident capacity-building and technical assistance were necessary and that they demanded significant time commitments by staff and residents alike. The initial round of technical assistance had to be extended from six months to a year. And even though outside vendors were used, Jobs-Plus program staff had to attend all-day weekend workshops with the residents and provide essential follow-up. The RVLT is now asking for additional technical assistance to assume new roles and responsibilities in its efforts to become legally incorporated as a nonprofit service provider and bid for HOPE VI service contracts at Rainier Vista.

The experience at Rainier Vista also shows how strategic planning and capacity-building can help the program to make better use of the retired and disabled SSI recipients in the developments. Like the other sites, Seattle Jobs-Plus experienced increasing turnover among busy working residents as more and more of them secured jobs. The resource center can rely on a stable core of retired and disabled residents to maintain the program's activities.

However, the importance of the project director's leadership and commitment cannot be underestimated. The project director at Rainier Vista had strong skills in program administration and community-organizing — a combination that is rarely found in a single person. And he had the firm backing of the executive director of the housing authority for the project overall, which strengthened his hand whenever he had to mediate between the residents and the housing authority.

Conclusion

Is the engagement of residents as collaborative partners a worthwhile way to design and implement Jobs-Plus? Overall, this chapter answers in the affirmative, mindful of one resident leader's response to the question: "Yes, it's worthwhile to *me*. There is a lot that would not have happened without the residents." The experience of Jobs-Plus so far has supported the political and pragmatic reasons that proponents generally cite for promoting client participation in program development. Resident engagement has been critical to winning the trust of the resident community and attracting participants to the program, particularly in view of their suspicion of the housing authority. Residents have contributed significantly in developing services that would be useful to them, identifying needs and proposing service approaches that were not obvious to professional staff operating under agency views of "what can be done." In the process, the residents acquired technical, analytical, administrative, and

leadership skills for assuming civic and professional responsibilities. In addition, the experience encouraged various partner agencies to let clients participate more in their general hiring and service delivery decisions.

But this chapter's affirmative view of resident engagement also acknowledges a range of problems, including the residents' need for technical expertise in order to advise an employment program, the limited pool of interested and available residents to engage in program development, and the adversarial relationship between residents and the housing authority.

It must also be emphasized that while residents have significantly influenced program development, the Jobs-Plus collaboratives and partner agencies can all go further in drawing on resident partnership to promote their responsiveness to residents' service needs. Currently, the authority and mechanisms to monitor the performance of the program and of the partner agencies are limited. Chapter 3 discussed that until recently the sites have lacked adequate management information systems to provide data on ongoing program performance, and they have lacked protocols requiring partner agencies to make information about their performance as Jobs-Plus service providers available to the collaborative.[21]

One key lesson to be learned is that, from the outset, employment must be emphasized clearly and forthrightly as the primary objective of Jobs-Plus and the measure of its success. As a senior MDRC official repeatedly insists in presentations to Jobs-Plus staff and resident leaders: "Your focus needs to be jobs, jobs, jobs." In this context, resident engagement is viewed most properly as a means to secure from residents the information and buy-in that the program needs to achieve its employment goals. From this perspective, resident empowerment is not to be an end in itself, particularly if it undercuts the program's timely implementation, services, and employment outcomes. At the same time, however, partner agencies and program staff must commit to giving due consideration to the information and ideas that residents do contribute.

Meaningful roles for residents should be specified early in the program and should be developed cooperatively with them. Residents should be included in outreach and follow-up responsibilities, which draw on their access to resident networks and their familiarity with the housing development. At the same time, focused technical assistance must be offered to help residents assume specific responsibilities. Collaborative partners can help, for example, by supplying or funding appropriate training and, perhaps, offering relevant staff internships (if not jobs) in their own agencies. Finally, it is important to recognize that all efforts to engage residents in Jobs-Plus rely heavily on the project director's commitment and diplomatic skills in initiating, orchestrating, and pursuing their participation.

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[21]Each of the Local School Councils (LSCs) described in footnote 15 that were charged with implementing school reforms in the Chicago public schools had access to such performance indicators as test scores, student body demographics, funding levels, and attendance and graduation rates of the local school it monitored. Furthermore, each LSC had access to various mechanisms to enforce its decisions, including subjecting the school to increased scrutiny, probation, and intervention from the higher-level officials (Fung, 2000, p. 3).

Chapter 7

Lessons and Recommendations

Introduction

At the beginning of 2001, collaboration is continuing at most of the Jobs-Plus sites that joined the demonstration roughly four years ago. The local partnerships are likely to endure for some time to come, and their Jobs-Plus programs are overcoming a rocky start and growing stronger. These partnerships have also made noteworthy (though uneven) progress in following the three guidelines established by the national designers of Jobs-Plus: that the funding for the program be shared, that services be delivered by a variety of agencies in a well-coordinated manner, and that the overall decisionmaking process for the program be inclusive.

Could Jobs-Plus have been operated well *without* some form of collaboration among the housing authority, local agencies, and public housing residents? It is hard to imagine that it could. The housing authority had neither the resources nor the expertise to provide the array of services and supports called for by a saturation-level, place-based employment initiative. Nor could any of the other partners have taken on such a project without the deep involvement of the housing authority. It is also unlikely that a program of this kind could attain legitimacy in the resident community without somehow engaging residents in its design or implementation. At the same time, it is fair to say that none of the collaborative members would go about the task of collaboration in exactly the same way again, in large part because they themselves have been dissatisfied with the pace of progress in getting a fully functioning, well-performing Jobs-Plus program designed and implemented.

This report has tried to learn from the collaboratives' experiences. It has explored the different ways in which the sites approached the many challenges of collaboration, the problems they encountered, the setbacks they endured, the new directions they sought and pursued, and the progress they made. The purpose of this chapter is to distill and highlight some of the most important lessons. In doing so, it points to what might be considered "smart practices"[1] for collaboration among multiple agencies and public housing residents involved with Jobs-Plus, in particular, and for collaboration on employment or other social initiatives, in general. These practical steps that local partners can use to work together more effectively might help shorten the learning curve for other efforts to design and operate a Jobs-Plus program or for other employment or social interventions that require the cooperation of multiple agencies and their clients.

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[1]Bardach, 1998.

Approaching Formal Governance

The efforts of the sites to build a decisionmaking process for Jobs-Plus that was both inclusive and productive led them first to create formal governance structures — a set of roles, rules, and procedures through which the partners would make authoritative program decisions collectively. Shared decisionmaking through formal governance can offer certain benefits. For example, it has the potential to foster a broad sense of ownership over the project among collaborative partners. And it can be an effective way to secure and sustain the resource commitments of member organizations as well as accountability for their performance in providing services. And formal governance gives clients, in particular, an official place at the decisionmaking table alongside service providers in determining which services and approaches might benefit their community. At the same time, the process of formal governance can be both difficult to manage well and extremely burdensome to the partners. As it turned out, the Jobs-Plus sites used formal collaborative governance mostly during the design phase, before Jobs-Plus program staff were in place. After programs were implemented, some collaboratives abandoned formal governance altogether, while others developed more streamlined governance approaches.

√ **Responsibility for formal governance, where it is attempted, should be restricted to a small governing board or executive committee of core partners and should include senior officials of participating agencies.**

Attempts in several sites to involve a large group of partners in a broad governance role in Jobs-Plus have proved to be unwieldy, unproductive, and unsustainable. Reaching decisions was often difficult, and many partners came to feel that their time was not well spent. In addition, numerous key agencies interested in being part of Jobs-Plus *did not want* a formal role in governing the program as a whole. A better approach would therefore be to restrict this responsibility to a small group of highly committed core partner agencies (especially those funding the intervention) and resident leaders. Moreover, the agency delegates should include some senior-level officials who are in a position to — and willing to — influence decisionmaking within their own agencies on behalf of Jobs-Plus. In general, a governing board should not be expected to seek further approval for its decisions from a broader group of partners. Other opportunities for productively tapping the expertise of other organizations (discussed later) should be promoted but need not be combined with governance responsibilities.

√ **The jurisdictional boundaries and responsibilities of the governing board should be clarified early on, especially vis-à-vis the lead partner.**

If the governing board is to have a meaningful role, significant policy, programmatic, and personnel decisions must be entrusted to it. If there is a lead partner — like the housing authority in Jobs-Plus — that is likely to have more invested and more at stake in the program, that partner may naturally be inclined to want to control its direction. This is even more likely when the program's key staff (such as the project director) are on that partner's

payroll. An understanding of the decisionmaking scope of the governing board must therefore be negotiated with the lead partner, and perhaps it should be encoded in a formal partnership agreement. This agreement should also clarify what kinds of decisions fall to the board versus the project director and staff. If a clear and meaningful scope of authority for the governing board cannot be defined or is not honored, then all pretense of formal governance ought to be abandoned. Instead, all the partners may do better by entering a set of strategic alliances that define specific ways in which they will work together to provide resources for the program and to deliver services to its participants.

√ **The governing board needs to be sensitive to the potential conflicts of interest that partner agencies may face in developing and monitoring the program.**

Members of a governing board are expected to make decisions that are in the best interest of the program. This includes deciding whether certain organizations should be invited (and perhaps contracted with) to serve clients through the program and whether those already doing so should continue. But what is good for the program may not necessarily be in the best interests of the partner agencies. The agency delegates may refrain from open and honest exchanges when the deliberations involve critical assessments of the performance of their own agency or of other partners, not wanting to undermine their standing with the program and the collaborative. This may particularly be a problem in the case of agencies that stand to benefit financially from the program as service vendors. The governing board needs to be sensitive to the potential conflicts of interest that partner agencies may face in developing the program and assessing its performance, and it should take steps to address these. For example, agencies might be required to recluse themselves from governing board decisions about the continuation of their role in the program.

√ **Most partners can contribute to decisionmaking in a variety of ways that do not involve a formal governance role, and these should be promoted.**

As discussed throughout this report, collaborative partners can feed ideas, insights, and advice into the decisionmaking process in a variety of ways. Partners can contribute by participating as members of subcommittees or task groups of the collaborative; participating in information-sharing and networking meetings for all partners (see the next section); engaging in regular, informal, and direct communication with the project director over decisions affecting the program; serving as on-site staff members of the Jobs-Plus program and taking part in the day-to-day decisionmaking; and assisting the program staff on an ad hoc basis in addressing particular program design, implementation, or funding issues. The project director and collaborative leaders should actively encourage and facilitate these alternative forms of engagement.

Building an Operations-Level Collaborative

Collaborative programs usually involve services that are provided by a variety of local institutions both on-site (in the case of Jobs-Plus, at the housing developments) and more typi-

cally off-site. Some services are provided under formal contracts with an agency or under other types of interagency agreements, while other services may be offered on an informal but routine referral basis. Although the program staff must therefore work together with staff from a dispersed network of providers that are connected to the program in different ways, the goals are to minimize duplication of effort and conflicting requirements and to ensure that clients get an appropriate and coherent package of services and do not "fall through the cracks."

√ **An operations-level collaborative should be established for securing partners' advice, promoting information-sharing, and networking.**

There can be value in organizing the program's main service providers into an official operations-level collaborative.[2] Members of this network should meet and communicate regularly (for example, monthly, quarterly, or biannually, depending on the maturity of the program) as partners and advisors, but without governance responsibilities. They should share ideas on how the program design or operation could be improved and should exchange information about new resources and service options that may be of value to the program.

Given the purposes of this partnership network, delegates should include midlevel and frontline staff, who are often well positioned to offer specific advice on how partner agencies can best coordinate their day-to-day work with clients. Moreover, their participation in regular collaborative meetings may foster the kinds of informal, personal relationships that can help them to cut through bureaucratic red tape in coordinating their agencies' services.

√ **The responsibilities of some frontline workers and the standard operating procedures of certain partner agencies may need to be restructured for better coordination of service delivery.**

As noted earlier, many residents of the Jobs-Plus housing developments are, or may become, clients simultaneously of a variety of agencies that together provide an array of employment-related activities, job development assistance, and supportive services. In each agency, separate rules and regulations may apply, and separate case managers or other frontline workers may be assigned to work with the client. The potential for duplication of services and for burdensome and possibly conflicting demands on clients calls for some degree of coordination of frontline service delivery across agencies.

To address such problems, agencies that are part of the operations-level network should try to fashion appropriate modifications in their normal procedures and a more efficient interagency division of labor among frontline staff. For example, a common protocol for accepting and referring residents across affiliated agencies that share a substantial number of the same clients could be developed, along with a common intake form (or common subsec-

[2]For example, if a Jobs-Plus program is operating in several housing developments in a large city, it may be worthwhile to create distinct development-level networks, as was done in Los Angeles.

tions) for enrolling clients who are referred across agencies. Responsibilities for guiding and monitoring clients' use of services might also be coordinated across agencies. For example, in the case of Jobs-Plus, lead responsibility for day-to-day case management might be given to Jobs-Plus staff, and procedures could be established through which case managers from all agencies assigned to a particular resident would confer regularly about that resident's employment progress.

√ **Joint training should be conducted for program staff and the frontline workers of partner agencies.**

To help frontline workers across a variety of agencies serve program participants better, efforts should be made to provide some joint training; separate staffs thus would become familiar with one another's services, regulations, and procedures. It is particularly important for Jobs-Plus staff to be trained on TANF participation requirements and time-limit rules that affect many residents but may be complex or confusing. Such training can also help frontline workers develop interpersonal relationships that facilitate the kind of ongoing, informal information-sharing that may be valuable in delivering a package of services and assistance appropriate to residents' needs and circumstances.[3]

√ **Systems for sharing data are key.**

Coordinating case management and other forms of individualized assistance to clients across agencies can be improved by sharing client status and tracking data in a timely way. At a minimum, steps should be taken to ensure that program staff and partner agencies have up-to-date information on their shared clients. In addition, it may be advantageous for some outside agencies (for example, the welfare department) to build into their computer tracking systems specific codes that allow them to identify easily which of their clients are participating in other agencies' activities. Creating a common database for some measures of client activity that are relevant across a number of agencies may also facilitate interagency communication, assistance, and monitoring. In some cases, however, clients' consent may be needed before confidential information can be shared.

√ **Few private sector employers are inclined to participate in an operations-level network or to serve on the collaborative's governing board or committees, so priority should be given to other ways of engaging employers.**

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[3]In the case of Jobs-Plus, opportunities should also be found for program staff to participate in routine departmental or system-wide meetings of the partner agencies. For example, they could attend district or regional meetings of welfare department staff and perhaps could be given time on the agenda to discuss Jobs-Plus. Similarly, frontline welfare staff, in addition to those assigned as official liaisons to the Jobs-Plus program, should be included in meetings of the full collaborative (perhaps on a rotating basis). Similar arrangements could be negotiated with other agencies as well.

Employers want prepared workers. Unless an employment program is able to operate at a scale that can provide a steady stream of workers trained in the skills needed by their company, individual employers are unlikely to want to invest the time required to be an active member of a collaborative or its various committees. This was the case for Jobs-Plus during the demonstration. Therefore, to tap employers' perspectives on program planning and ongoing development, efforts should be directed at involving employer associations, such as the local Chamber of Commerce, as partners in the operations-level collaborative. The program's job developers should also cultivate relationships with a pool of firms likely at some time to have jobs suitable for program participants. They need to keep employers informed about the benefits of seeking workers through the program and to urge (and periodically remind) employers to contact the program when appropriate job openings occur.

Special Considerations in Linking Jobs-Plus to the Welfare Department and WIA One-Stop Career Centers

The national sponsors of the Jobs-Plus demonstration required all local collaboratives to include, at a minimum, the welfare department and the workforce development agencies (of the Job Training Partnership Act [JTPA] and then of the Workforce Investment Act [WIA]). At the service delivery level, the experiences of the sites point to a number of adaptations within these institutions that can help them work with the housing authority in delivering employment-related services to public housing residents. The following adaptations may also be helpful for other place-based employment initiatives that seek to address the employment needs of people residing in a particular geographical area.

√ **TANF rules should be modified to permit welfare recipients who live in public housing to fulfill their welfare-to-work participation requirements by participating in Jobs-Plus.**

Many potential Jobs-Plus participants are welfare recipients who are subject to TANF requirements to participate in the state or local welfare-to-work program. Failure to participate in required activities without good cause can result in the loss of welfare benefits. If, therefore, residents have to choose between participation in Jobs-Plus or TANF, most would not choose Jobs-Plus. To avoid this conflict, TANF policies should be modified to give credit for Jobs-Plus participation.

√ **Welfare staff caseload assignments should be consolidated for Jobs-Plus.**

The coordination of case management, income maintenance, employment counseling, and other functions of frontline welfare department staff with the work of Jobs-Plus staff can be facilitated by a process of "caseload matching." Welfare recipients living in a Jobs-Plus housing development should be assigned to specially trained and designated welfare workers. Colocating welfare staff at the Jobs-Plus developments — even if only on a part-time basis — would provide significantly greater opportunities for integrating the services and assistance of the program, and it would reduce the number of welfare staff who must become

knowledgeable about Jobs-Plus — and the number of welfare staff with whom Jobs-Plus staff must build professional relationships.

√ **Jobs-Plus can serve as a recruitment source for services provided largely at a WIA one-stop career center or as a satellite to it.**

WIA legislation pushes toward greater coordination of federally funded employment and training programs that are operated by a variety of agencies. It also requires that much of this coordination occur through the formation of one-stop career centers in local areas. If Jobs-Plus operates near such a center, it is important to decide how the program can best be linked to it.

For public housing residents who might benefit from the kinds of employment-related services offered at a local one-stop, Jobs-Plus can function as a vehicle for recruiting and directing residents to the center's services, while supplying some additional on-site monitoring and follow-up. It can supplement these outreach and referral efforts with the program's other two components (financial work incentives and community support for work). It would be advantageous for the one-stop to assign specific liaison staff to help the Jobs-Plus participants navigate the facility and put together an appropriate package of services.

It is likely, however, that many public housing residents, especially those who are among the harder-to-serve, will be reluctant to go to a one-stop. Thus, an alternative approach is to consider Jobs-Plus as a one-stop center in and off itself — perhaps a satellite that is linked to the region's main center — that offers at least some employment-related activities on-site, along with primary case management functions. Residents may view this as a more accessible, personalized, and user-friendly alternative.

√ **Jobs-Plus should take advantage of one-stops as a way to assist people who are not on a lease but who have relationships with legal residents of the public housing development.**

All Jobs-Plus sites have struggled with the question of whether and, if so, how to serve people who are not officially residents of the Jobs-Plus development (that is, are not on any lease) but who are part of the social networks of legitimate tenants. Some of these people may be residents' friends or partners, or the parents of their children, and may even be living in the development unofficially. One reason for wanting to assist them is that their support (especially boyfriends') is thought to be essential in many cases for reaching and helping official tenants. But investing program resources and staff time in serving nonresidents or unofficial residents competes with services for official residents. Forging a connection with a region's one-stop may be a valuable option. Jobs-Plus staff could routinely refer such individuals to that center, perhaps coordinating efforts with a liaison there who is assigned to the program. This could minimize the burden placed directly on Jobs-Plus staff while allowing them to respond positively to individuals who are interested in employment services but who would not generally be considered eligible for Jobs-Plus.

Engaging Residents

The experience of Jobs-Plus so far has supported the political and pragmatic reasons that proponents generally cite for promoting client participation in program development for community-based initiatives. Resident participation in Jobs-Plus has been critical to winning the trust of the resident community and attracting participants to the program. Resident representatives have been an important source of information in planning discussions about the community's needs and local conditions and about residents' likely responses to program offerings, procedures, and staffing. At the same time, there are many challenges associated with resident engagement.

√ **Increasing employment at the housing development should be the foremost consideration in engaging residents as collaborative partners and in any commitment to resident empowerment through Jobs-Plus.**

The central mission of Jobs-Plus is to increase resident employment. In this context, resident engagement in program decisionmaking and service delivery is viewed most properly as a means of securing from residents the information, advice, buy-in, and specific assistance that the program needs to achieve its employment goals. A broader effort to promote resident leadership roles and program management responsibilities through Jobs-Plus is a worthwhile goal. But this is likely to take a long time to accomplish, and it should not be pursued in a way that undercuts the program's timely implementation and the quality of its services (for example, by giving residents wholesale control over certain parts of the program without an obvious tie to performance requirements, or by giving preference to inexperienced residents over trained professionals in hiring Jobs-Plus staff). At the same time, it must be emphasized that a systematic effort to help residents acquire the knowledge and skills needed to work effectively with collaborative members and staff is likely also to provide them with a greater capacity for leadership and involvement in other community issues. Furthermore, residents are empowered by the collaborative's concerted, institutionalized efforts to work with them as partners — instead of clients — in designing and monitoring services for their community.

√ **The project director and other collaborative leaders must champion and promote the involvement and input of residents as influential partners.**

In past initiatives that called for residents of disadvantaged communities to join public and private agencies at the planning table, residents have frequently found themselves with no more than a token role in making decisions about services and programs for their communities. As noted earlier, for example, in formal meetings involving agency delegates and residents, the professionals may naturally tend to dominate the discussion; compared with residents, the professionals are likely to be better educated and more skilled in the deliberative processes of formal meetings, and they may feel that they have higher standing by virtue of representing important institutions. Such attitudes may be exacerbated to the extent that residents and professional delegates come from different racial and ethnic groups. Further-

more, service collaborations like Jobs-Plus often lack adequate formal mechanisms to hold partner agencies or the program accountable to the community, so residents have no assurance that their concerns will be duly considered or that the collaborative's decisions will be enacted.

In the experience of Jobs-Plus, the actions of the project director and other leaders of the collaborative (such as the chairperson or facilitator of the governing board, when such positions exist) have been critical for engaging residents. The project director and other leaders need to proactively ensure during collaborative proceedings (and through other formal and informal opportunities) that residents' opinions and insights are solicited and given due consideration. This can include, for example, conducting surveys of residents to learn about their service needs and assess their satisfaction with the program, or working to give residents and other collaborative partners a voice in the process by which agencies select and evaluate service vendors.

At the same time, the project director must walk a delicate line as the mediator of competing interests and must not come to be viewed — and, potentially, dismissed — by the partner agencies as an advocate for residents who is unwilling to challenge their demands or viewpoints; similarly, the project director must avoid being seen by the residents as someone who is biased in favor of the institutional partners.

√ **Efforts should be made to reach beyond traditional, narrow resident leadership and to cultivate input from a broader cross-section of the population over time.**

The leaders of the resident advisory council, who are most likely to be (or to appoint) the resident delegates to the collaborative's governing board, are oftentimes long-standing leaders within their public housing development. In some cases, they may serve the narrow interests of a small group; in the worst cases, they may be opportunistic operatives who exploit their access to the program's opportunities and resources to enhance their power through a form of patronage. Resident leaders also may not represent the diversity of cultural groups in the housing development. Under these circumstances, it becomes important for the collaborative partners and project director, while working with traditional resident leaders, also to cultivate opportunities for a broader group of residents to have input into the decisions made about Jobs-Plus. For example, periodic "town meetings" open to all residents might be used to describe new proposals, to report on the program's progress, and to solicit feedback. Special meetings might also be held with the informal leaders of various groups in multi-ethnic developments.[4] Efforts to encourage a broader pool of applicants for resident staff positions

[4]Efforts should also be made to provide opportunities for working residents with jobs outside the development to fill some of the resident delegate positions within the collaborative. For example, formal meetings of the governing partners and the full collaborative might be scheduled in the evening, after normal business hours, with dinner served. Alternatively, the program might help some residents negotiate with their employer for leave time to allow them to participate in such meetings without jeopardizing their jobs. The collaborative might even offer to pay the employer to cover the wages of residents during the time they miss work to attend such meetings, or it might pay the residents directly, if they stand to lose pay.

— and to allow the collaborative's governing board and project director, not resident leaders alone, to determine who is selected — may also be useful.

√ **The collaborative should create managerial roles and staffing positions for which residents may be best or uniquely suited.**

Early on, meaningful roles for residents in the program should be specified and developed cooperatively with them. For example, including them in outreach efforts and in filling community support for work positions draws naturally on residents' social networks and on their special knowledge about the housing development and the people living there. Managerial responsibilities that are allocated to residents should be tailored to fit some discrete program function or activity (the operation of the Rainer Vista Job Resource Center in Seattle is one example), and residents, like other staff members, should be held accountable for meeting high standards of performance.

√ **Technical assistance should be provided to build residents' capacity for governance, management, and line staff roles, and it should be tailored to the specific functions those roles entail.**

Residents can and should play a variety of roles in a Jobs-Plus collaborative and program, and technical assistance by a third party can help prepare them to perform those roles well. The value of the technical assistance may be greater, though, when it is tailored to the specific functions that residents will serve and when it is limited to only residents who are selected to perform those functions. In essence, technical assistance should be thought of as akin to training for a specific job. In contrast, more generic technical assistance that focuses on vague concepts like "leadership development" — as was typically tried early in the demonstration — may heighten residents' expectations and awareness but not provide them with the expertise and sometimes legal knowledge needed to perform specific functions in this employment program. Collaborative partners can also help provide relevant capacity-building opportunities for residents, for example, by creating mentorships, internships, and on-the-job training opportunities and, in some cases, by paying for training courses to give residents the skills relevant to positions within Jobs-Plus.

Selecting and Supporting Program Leaders

The inclusiveness and productivity of the collaborative's decisionmaking process, and the efficiency and effectiveness with which partner agencies in the operations-level network collaborate in the delivery of services for Jobs-Plus, can be affected significantly by the commitment and skills of the project director, who is typically expected to manage the collaborative as well as the program. Finding a person with the appropriate values and skills should thus be a paramount concern.

√ **The project director should be a person who values collaboration, is a skilled diplomat, and possesses the technical knowledge and managerial acumen suited to the particular nature and goals of Jobs-Plus.**

In order to be an effective leader, the Jobs-Plus project director should bring a diverse set of skills and attributes to the program. For example, he or she should:

- be philosophically committed to the principles of collaboration and willing to promote opportunities for agency and resident delegates alike to have their voices heard, not only within formal meetings of the partners but also between meetings, through ongoing, informal relationships;
- have the ability to earn the respect and trust of a diverse group of key stakeholders, in order to mediate conflicts (particularly between the housing authority and residents);
- be skillful in working with residents from an array of socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds and who are of different ages and from groups with diverse lifestyles;
- be committed to the primacy of employment as the collaborative's main goal; and
- be skilled at getting the decisionmaking group not just to confer but also to decide things, and be willing to ensure that necessary follow-up work between meetings will get done.

√ **The project director's dual roles of leading the collaborative and managing the program may be untenable without additional partner or staff support.**

The competing demands on a project director to manage both the collaborative and the program make it difficult to provide adequate attention to each of these responsibilities simultaneously. Other staff support, such as in the form of an associate director and an administrative assistant, can help enormously in meeting these challenges.[5]

Consideration should also be given to lessening the burden on the project director by assigning primary responsibility for managing the governing board to one of the delegates on that board, who would work closely with the project director. However, that board leader should also be provided with a separate, paid administrative assistant to handle the variety of administrative duties that result in well-orchestrated meetings (such as scheduling the meetings, distributing agendas and other materials beforehand, helping to gather important background information, and recording and distributing minutes).

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[5]It is also important to consider that the particular set of skills and attributes that the ideal project director should possess are not easy to find in a single person. Therefore, if an associate director position is created, an effort should be made to ensure that the person who is hired has skills complementary to those of the project director.

Holding the Partners and the Program Staff Accountable for High Performance

Ensuring accountability is more difficult for a program delivered and overseen by a partnership of diverse agencies and residents than for one operated by a single organization. Whereas a single-agency program has the benefit of a clear and legally based hierarchy of authority, accountability is much more diffuse in a collaborative initiative. In the case of Jobs-Plus, promoting high performance (for example, operating high-quality components and getting large numbers of residents employed) depends on effective accountability processes on at least three levels: among the partners themselves, between the governing partners and the project director, and between the project director and a program staff made up of individuals from multiple agencies and residents.

√ **Governing partners must hold themselves and other agencies accountable by capitalizing on informal relationships as well as formal interagency agreements.**

The performance of a multi-agency initiative like Jobs-Plus is significantly affected by the degree to which the various organizations that contribute resources, in-kind services, and professional expertise actually follow through on their commitments. Performance is also influenced by the commitment of service vendors and public agencies to ensure high-quality efforts by their frontline workers in serving the Jobs-Plus residents who are referred to them. With private service vendors, performance-based contracts offer one formal means of accountability, because contracts can be terminated if performance is poor. Similarly, if a vendor with an independent source of funding provides services on a referral basis without payment from Jobs-Plus, the program can stop referring residents to that vendor if its service quality is too low.

In contrast, it is very difficult for public or private agencies that serve Jobs-Plus residents without direct payment to hold *each other* accountable, because no one agency has formal authority over the others. This is particularly the case in the absence of a legal mandate requiring the agencies to provide certain services or resources. The housing authority, for example, cannot be legally compelled by partner agencies to enforce high standards of performance among the personnel it assigns to the program. Nor can the housing authority compel the welfare department or the workforce development agencies to improve the ways in which their frontline workers serve Jobs-Plus residents.

The experience of the Jobs-Plus collaboratives was that the efforts that senior officials and line staff of the partner agencies made on behalf of the program depended heavily on their view of its importance to their agency's mission and on their personal commitment to helping it succeed. Efforts should therefore be directed both at elevating the political profile of Jobs-Plus in the partner agencies and at strengthening the personal commitment of agency officials and delegates. This might be done through the peer relationships that develop among collaborative members as agency delegates reinforce each other's efforts to build

support for Jobs-Plus within their home agencies.[6] And legislation that can enhance the political importance to an agency of assisting the program should be used to leverage these efforts.[7]

At the same time, the governing board should try to secure more leverage over the partner agencies through formal instruments. For example, memoranda of agreement can be composed that require agencies to specify the services or resources they will provide or the responsibilities they will assume in greater detail than is usually the case. And the governing board should secure a voice in the processes used by the partner agencies to outstation personnel or to select and review the performance of vendors.

√ **Clear lines of authority and accountability should be established between the project director and the governing board.**

As previously discussed, the successful operation of a Jobs-Plus program depends critically on the skills and performance of the project director. Therefore, if a governing board is established and is to play a meaningful and influential oversight role, it should be granted some say over the selection of the project director and his or her continuation in that role, even if that person is officially on the payroll of the housing authority or some other agency. In addition, it should be clear to the project director (and perhaps specified in a written job description for the position) that he or she is accountable to the governing board, not just to the agency paying his or her salary. Finally, the governing board must then take this oversight responsibility seriously by setting high standards of performance for the project director and monitoring that performance closely.

√ **The project director should be granted significant authority over the colocated staff from various agencies in order to foster better interagency coordination of service delivery and accountability for line staff performance.**

Colocating some service providers' frontline staff at the Jobs-Plus development is another potential vehicle for drawing on agencies' expertise and resources — and in a concrete way. But colocation does not automatically lead to good coordination or integration of services. Staff may take direction primarily from their home agencies, making little effort to adapt their procedures and approaches to jibe with those of counterparts from other on-site

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[6]The delegates might also contribute to building stronger commitment within one another's home agency by participating in joint periodic briefings about Jobs-Plus within each agency. Such briefings — which could focus on the program's accomplishments, continuing needs, evolving new directions, and collaborative funding and service delivery strategies — may be helpful in keeping Jobs-Plus visible among a number of senior officials within an agency, perhaps helping to build a broader base of support in the process. (Anticipated turnover among senior agency officials increases the potential value of such briefings.)

[7]For example, the welfare department is more likely to regard working with the housing authority to address the employment needs of TANF recipients in public housing as a priority if legislation is passed that mandates such cooperation as a condition of its funding, instead of merely recommending such partnerships, as is the case now.

agencies. Getting frontline agency staff to work together as members of one team should therefore be identified in official interagency agreements as an explicit operational objective, and deliberate procedures should be developed to support it. However, unless outstationed staff feel at least somewhat accountable to the project director for their Jobs-Plus performance, such agreements will be meaningless. Thus, the project director should be granted some authority over all outstationed staff. As part of this, he or she should have veto power over the selection of particular individuals to be located on-site, should prepare performance reviews for their home agencies, and should have the authority to terminate their assignment to Jobs-Plus if they perform poorly.

Collaborative Funding

Collaboration is generally used as a way to secure funding and other resources for an initiative that a single agency would have difficulty undertaking on its own. This was certainly the case for the Jobs-Plus demonstration. As required by the national designers, Jobs-Plus was funded largely through cash and in-kind resources controlled in each site by the housing authority, the welfare department, and the workforce investment system. But the experience of the Jobs-Plus sites underscores the difficulty of securing flexible cash resources. Moreover, some of the in-kind contributions by the welfare and workforce development agencies were in the form of colocated staff who were restricted in terms of the people they could serve. In order to sustain Jobs-Plus and promote the kind of experimentation and service integration that the initiative was intended to achieve, the collaborative partners needed to ensure that the program got more stable and more flexible funding and other resources. In the case of Jobs-Plus or another multi-agency employment initiative, the following funding sources and institutional accommodations can be helpful.

√ **TANF funds can be tapped for cash contributions to help support Jobs-Plus.**

The federal regulations governing the use of TANF funds by states and localities were substantially revised in 1999. The new regulations make it easier for programs like Jobs-Plus to draw on TANF funds for a variety of purposes. Efforts should thus be made to gain access to those resources, which may be more flexible than welfare dollars have traditionally been.

√ **Interagency agreements should be negotiated to allow colocated TANF, WIA, and other agency staff to serve public housing residents who are not clients of their systems (in addition to those who are).**

Not all participants in Jobs-Plus will be clients of any single agency other than the housing authority. As a result, other agencies' staff who are outstationed at the Jobs-Plus housing development are sometimes restricted with regard to whom they can provide with case management, employment counseling, job development, and support services (such as child care). This can complicate the provision of services in a place-based initiative that aims to assist *all* working-age residents. The program could operate in a more coherent and integrated way if there were fewer such restrictions. Interagency agreements should thus be

sought to facilitate more flexible mixing of in-kind resources, which can compensate to some extent for limited access to flexible cash resources.

Contending with the Normal Bureaucratic Constraints of the Housing Authority

The very nature of the Jobs-Plus program — a place-based initiative within public housing developments — makes the contributions and cooperation of the local housing authority uniquely critical to the program's successful implementation. At the very least, the housing authority's cooperation is needed for acquiring space for program staff and certain on-site activities, hiring program staff, procuring equipment and services, and restructuring rent policies and procedures to implement the program's financial incentives component.

√ **The commitment of senior housing authority officials and how they view the mission of public housing should determine whether Jobs-Plus is even attempted at a site, and whether the housing authority should be the lead agency.**

As an employment initiative, Jobs-Plus challenges the housing authority's traditional mission and priorities, which give primacy to housing maintenance, management, and lease enforcement. The program also makes new kinds of demands on various divisions of the agency. Consequently, high commitment among the housing authority's executive director and other top managers is essential if agency-controlled resources are to be invested in the program, and if other housing authority staff are to feel encouraged, obligated, and rewarded for helping it succeed. In short, without a significant level of support from senior officials, Jobs-Plus is unlikely to thrive.

At the same time, senior housing authority officials may be supportive of the initiative but may not want to take on the role of lead agency for the collaborative. It may be feasible and desirable under some circumstances for another collaborative partner to assume that responsibility; nonetheless, the deep involvement of the housing authority and its leadership's commitment to the project will always remain critical.

√ **Senior housing authority officials should consider ways to "fast-track" procurement requests for Jobs-Plus or ways of using other agencies to circumvent the housing authority's own bureaucratic constraints (if such constraints are likely to undermine program operations).**

Housing authority procurement rules and personnel regulations can seriously delay or impede expenditures that need to be made for Jobs-Plus. In some cases, the housing authority can establish procedures that expedite the handling of these requests when failure to do so can jeopardize the program's performance. Alternatively, the housing authority could channel some of the funds it controls and would spend on Jobs-Plus to another institutional partner through a subcontract, under which procurement requirements and personnel policies are not so restrictive or slow. For example, HUD or other federal or private grants for resident employment and social services could be allocated to a private, not-for-profit or-

ganization and could be used to pay the salaries of the Jobs-Plus project director and some program staff (a tactic used in two of the demonstration sites). In that case, the hiring procurement policies of the outside organization, not the housing authority, would prevail.

√ **On-site housing authority managers should be involved in the design and oversight of the program to foster broader housing authority support and better coordination.**

Ongoing cooperation is particularly essential between Jobs-Plus staff and the housing management staff who are located at the development and are responsible for, among other things, collecting rent, coordinating maintenance of the buildings and grounds, monitoring residents' compliance with their leases, and orienting new tenants to the development. As the most immediate representatives of the "landlord," these are the housing authority staff whom residents are likely to know best. They are also in position to influence the development's access to housing authority resources and the implementation of housing authority rules, regulations, and initiatives. Thus, their support for — or opposition to — Jobs-Plus can substantially affect the program's day-to-day operations and the degree to which it evolves into a prominent and well-integrated part of the official workings of the housing development. To secure the support of these housing managers and enlist their help in crafting a high-quality program, efforts should be made to involve them as delegates to the collaborative (possibly as governing board members) and to include them in meetings where partner agencies or Jobs-Plus staff discuss program design and resident recruitment issues.

Conclusion

To the extent that various organizations seek to improve the economic self-sufficiency of the residents of a community — through Jobs-Plus or other types of employment initiatives — they will undoubtedly need to turn to other public and private agencies and resident leaders for help. Attempts to do so are likely to confront a common set of challenges. For example: How should a decisionmaking and advisory process involving multiple partners be structured? How should agencies collaborate "on the ground" in the delivery and financing of services? What kinds of institutional adaptations would enhance the coordination of services? How can residents be engaged fairly and productively in decisionmaking, management, and service delivery? And how can accountability for performance be achieved?

Although the ultimate judgment of whether the Jobs-Plus program is worthy of replication must await the research findings on employment and income effects, the experiences that the sites had with collaboration — which illustrate different approaches that might be taken, what might go wrong, and which strategies might work better — speak to all these questions and have relevance that extends beyond public housing.

Appendix A

Collaboration in Other Initiatives for Low-Income Families: A Brief Review[1]

Introduction

Collaboration has been an important theme in initiatives for low-income families and communities for decades, and a review of these past efforts can provide a useful context for assessing collaboration in Jobs-Plus. This appendix briefly summarizes three types of collaborative initiatives that have direct relevance to Jobs-Plus: (1) neighborhood-based revitalization efforts that seek resident participation in planning and implementing a broad array of programs and activities intended to improve neighborhood conditions; (2) efforts to get two or more government agencies serving low-income families to coordinate or collaborate to improve their service delivery efforts; and (3) efforts to get public housing authorities to work together with public housing residents and other groups to improve conditions and services within public housing developments.

Neighborhood-Based Reform Efforts

Efforts of the 1960s

A series of foundation-sponsored and government programs in the 1960s experimented with using a variety of locally based collaborative bodies to design and implement broad-based community revitalization efforts and promote service integration. These included the Gray Areas project, funded by the Ford Foundation; the Community Action Program (CAP), established as part of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity's War on Poverty; and the federally initiated Model Cities program.

These community-based planning initiatives are generally regarded as highly flawed efforts in which the problems outweighed the successes, largely because the established institutions were reluctant to share power and the partners failed to develop mutual trust.[2] Attempts to give ordinary citizens a role and to get agency professionals to share decisionmaking with them proved particularly divisive; such problems in CAP overshadowed the original goal of achieving better coordination of services at the local level.[3] The Model Cities initia-

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[1]This appendix was written by Patricia Auspos.

[2]Halpern, 1995; McNeely, 1995; O'Connor, 1999.

[3]Chaskin and Garg, 1997, citing Peterson and Greenstone, 1977.

tive, which followed CAP, increased the role of city government officials and reduced the role of community residents, but it produced few accomplishments in coordinating local service delivery.[4]

Comprehensive Community Initiatives

A new round of experimentation and innovation in neighborhood reform initiatives emerged in the Comprehensive Community Initiative (CCI) movement in the late 1980s and 1990s. By the late 1990s, there were about 50 of these initiatives, most of them sponsored by private foundations. Despite considerable variation in their programmatic goals, strategies, resources, and governance structures, these initiatives all emphasize the importance of community-building through resident involvement and collaborative decisionmaking at the neighborhood level and the need to integrate change efforts in multiple arenas, such as social services, education, training, economic development, crime, and safety.[5]

The 1990s community initiatives provide more encouraging evidence about the potential of creating collaboratives that can bring together a diverse array of partners and get a variety of projects off the ground, although they also show many of the same tensions and include some outright failures. On the positive side, many CCIs have established collaboratives in some sites that have been functioning for years and that have successfully designed and implemented a variety of projects. These include, for example, the four neighborhoods in Detroit, Hartford, Memphis, and Milwaukee that make up the Neighborhood and Families Initiative; and the collaborative bodies established by the Savannah and Little Rock sites in the New Futures initiative, both of which continue to function (in a modified form) as institutions for community innovation and reform more than 10 years later.[6] Many CCIs engage a combination of residents, community partners, partner agencies, and government representatives; others engage only a subset of such partners. Several have made concerted efforts not only to involve residents in planning but also to organize residents and coach them to take on management responsibilities for projects.[7]

On the negative side, the CCI literature also includes instances of failed collaborative efforts, where members proved unable to work together or develop a functioning governance structure or where some of the targeted members never participated in the collaborative.[8]

Many CCIs have successfully implemented an array of programs or projects, but they typically implement far less than they initially planned (perhaps because their initial focus was overly ambitious), take much longer than anticipated to get programs up and running, and may be forced to abandon some projects as infeasible. Several studies note that CCI collaboratives have found it especially difficult to translate their broad vision and goals into specific projects or programs, that systems reform changes have proved harder to accomplish

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[4]Halpern, 1995.

[5]For an overview of CCIs, see Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997, and Stone, 1996.

[6]Walsh, n.d.

[7]Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Burns and Spilka, 1997; Brown, Branch, and Lee, 1998.

[8]Pitt, Brown, and Hirota, 1999; Walsh, n.d.; Nario-Redmond, Milligan, and Norton, 1999.

than getting service programs in place, and that decisions tend to be made on an opportunistic rather than a strategic basis.[9]

Government-Sponsored Place-Based Collaborative Efforts in the 1990s

Federal and state governments have also begun to adopt the principles of resident participation, local collaboration, "bottom-up" planning, and community-building in their urban policy initiatives in the 1990s.[10] The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) specifically endorsed these principles and mandated participation from a variety of community groups in its Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) initiative.[11] Evidence on the actual role that community groups are playing in planning and implementing the local programs is mixed, however. A recent study of EZ/EC collaborative efforts in 18 localities concludes that citizen participation in the development of the cities' strategic plans was "significantly and substantively greater" than in previous federal initiatives.[12] However, real grass-roots participation was less than intended, and tensions and standoffs between the local government and community groups had emerged in some cities. Another study on community participation and community-building in the six federal urban empowerment zones found that community members played a greater role during the planning period than during the early implementation stage and that conflict between project staff and community representatives also increased during the implementation stage as each group tried to move the initiative in different directions.[13]

Collaboration Among Welfare and Employment Agencies

In addition to these place-based initiatives, a parallel trend in the 1980s and 1990s sought to improve service delivery in various government programs by promoting interagency collaboration. These interagency initiatives were not necessarily place-based, did not necessarily bring community residents to the decisionmaking table, and typically lacked a community-building focus. The expectation is that such efforts can eliminate costly service duplication, expand resources, and refocus resources to provide new or expanded services that can help

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[9]Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997.

[10]An example of a state-sponsored initiative is New York's Neighborhood Based Alliance, enacted in 1991, which called for the creation of neighborhood governance entities, composed entirely of neighborhood members, in 27 sites across the state, to plan and coordinate a broad range of activities within the neighborhood, including education, economic development, housing, and social services. See Chaskin and Garg, 1997.

[11]O'Connor, 1999; Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, n.d.

[12]Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, n.d.

[13]Gitell and Newman, 1998.

fill existing service gaps and make it easier for "customers" to access services — all of which will result in improvements in the quality of the services offered.[14]

Of particular relevance to Jobs-Plus are recent attempts to get local employment agencies and welfare agencies to work together on programs to help welfare recipients train for or obtain employment. One highly successful example is a district in Oregon where the local welfare office, the local Chambers of Commerce, community colleges, JTPA agencies, and the Oregon Employment Department forged a strong cooperative partnership in which all the partners jointly made major decisions about budgeting and programming. According to a recent evaluation of the program (based on a rigorous experimental design), all the partners developed a sense of ownership over, commitment to, and responsibility for the welfare-to-work program they jointly developed, and the program substantially increased employment and earnings levels among local welfare recipients.[15] Other promising examples of interagency efforts involving employment agencies and welfare agencies are cited in Sussman.[16]

More ambitious efforts aim to bring together a wide range of service agencies and other organizations to create a comprehensive service delivery system that can meet the multiple needs of children and/or their families and focus on prevention and asset-building. Several case studies highlight a few efforts that are considered to be making progress in this direction.[17] One of these successful efforts grew out of the collaborative effort initiated by the New Futures initiative in Savannah.

In general, however, studies tend to document the limited success of past and current efforts to develop effective collaborations between welfare agencies and workforce development agencies, suggest that the potential for developing working collaboratives or coordination efforts has not been fully realized, and identify a number of factors that hinder such efforts.[18] Differences in the organizational culture (professional vocabulary, mission, goals, concerns, reward structures, and so on) of the partner agencies, for example, can make it difficult for staff from different agencies to find common ground, and the desire to protect their autonomy and "turf" provides a strong impediment to effective collaboration. Even when agency representatives are willing to collaborate, numerous bureaucratic practices and statutory and regulatory restrictions — such as incompatible data management systems, different eligibility criteria and philosophies, different performance standards — can make it difficult for them to serve each other's clients or develop joint forms or procedures on the ground.

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[14]See, for example, Melaville with Blank, 1991; Mattessich and Monsey, 1992; Pitt, Brown, and Hirota, 1999; Martinson, 1999.

[15]Scrivener et al., 1998.

[16]Sussman, 2000.

[17]U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, n.d.

[18]Leonard, 1999; Martinson, 1999; McNeely, 1995; Dunkle and Surles, 1998; Bardach, 1998.

Involving Residents in Reform Efforts in Public Housing

There is also a tradition of involving residents in the management of public housing developments. In addition, the Public Housing Drug Elimination program, the Family Self-Sufficiency program, and the Hope VI program have encouraged or required public housing authorities to develop partnerships with other service agencies or provider organizations to develop employment-related projects and other programs and supports that can help public housing residents become self-sufficient and/or become involved in program planning efforts.[19]

Most notable, from the standpoint of Jobs-Plus, is Hope VI, a federal initiative authorized in 1993 that aims to revitalize public housing communities by physically rebuilding them and helping resident families move toward self-sufficiency by providing such supports as job readiness preparation, job training, job placement and retention assistance, literacy training, child care, and health services. Hope VI requires resident input in the planning and implementation process, and its official guidelines stress the importance of involving residents at each stage of the process, keeping them informed about the HOPE VI plans, eliciting their views, and training them so they can play a meaningful role in deliberations. However, the power to make the final decisions is vested in the housing authority. HUD requires HOPE VI sites to develop partnerships with other institutions, service agencies, or community organizations that can provide the desired programs, but it does not mandate the formal collaborative structure or partners that are required in Jobs-Plus. Typically, resident involvement has been centered in the elected resident councils. A recent study highlights the accomplishments, best practices, and lessons learned about resident engagement and community-building in seven exemplary Hope VI programs and related employment initiatives and argues that "the HOPE VI community-building approach can be made to work under the right circumstances."[20]

Some General Lessons

Despite the potential benefits of collaborative approaches to helping low-income families and communities, the literature makes clear that operational success is by no means guaranteed. On the contrary, a general finding — in documentation studies of specific cases as well as in more theoretical works on collaboration — is that collaboration is a difficult, time-consuming, energy-intensive, slow process. As noted, the evaluation literature presents a mixed record of success and failure in efforts to establish functioning collaboratives that can bring a variety of partners together and get programs up and running. Nor is there much evidence to show whether interagency collaboration has enhanced program effectiveness, reduced costs, or made it easier for clients to access services; or to show that community change initiatives that bring together a broad array of local stakeholders have been successful in achieving such

[19]For an overview and in-depth case studies of successful efforts, see Center for Community Change, 1999; Wood et al., 1999; and Naparstek, Freis, and Kingsley, 2000.

[20]Naparstek, Freis, and Kingsley, 2000, p. 68.

goals as reducing childhood poverty or teen pregnancy in specific communities within their allotted time frame.[21]

There is substantial agreement in the literature about some of the key aspects of well-functioning collaboratives and about some general principles for developing them, namely:

- Collaborative members must develop mutual understanding, respect, and trust and must be willing to compromise. All partners must feel that collaboration is in their self-interest, and they need to develop a sense of ownership in the collaborative and its projects. The collaborative's purpose, goals, and short-term and long-term outcomes as well as the roles and responsibilities of its various partners must be clearly defined and understood.

- There must be regular, frequent, and open communication among the partners. This may include informal as well as formal communication and written as well as in-person contact.

- If government agencies are included, it is important to involve both top-level staff (who can help set the tone and make it clear that the agency is committed) and line staff (who will be doing the work on the ground).

- Collaboratives require adequate resources, including financial resources and manpower. Staffing and leadership are critical to the success of the process.

- Background factors and the external environment can also affect the success of a collaborative effort. These include the prior relationships among the collaborative members; whether the local political and social environments are supportive of or conducive to collaboration; and whether the collaborative body is able to establish legitimacy in the larger community.

These principles have been adapted from a list of 19 "factors" that are thought to affect the success of collaborative efforts, as discussed in Mattessich and Monsey, based on their review of the then-existing literature on collaboration.[22] The principles have been reiterated and confirmed in the growing body of documentation on specific CCIs and other collaborative efforts.

Additional insights into the collaborative process are provided in more recent literature on interagency collaboration and collaboration in CCIs in the studies noted above. Several

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[21]Martinson, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Morse, 1996; Stagner and Duran, 1997; Walsh, n.d. However, the lack of evidence does not necessarily mean these efforts have failed. As Martinson, 1999, and Stagner and Duran, 1997, point out, most studies on collaboration and service integration either have not attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of the program strategies or have used a follow-up period that may have been too short to capture the anticipated results.

[22]Mattessich and Monsey, 1992, group the 19 factors they discuss into six categories: factors relating to environment, membership characteristics, process/structure, communication, purpose, and resources.

experts suggest that interagency collaboration is a developmental or capacity-building process that moves through successive stages or phases that build on each other and lay the groundwork for the next phase or stage.[23] Ferguson has written in particular about the key element of trust-building as a developmental process and has identified several steps or aspects in that process.[24] Recent analyses of collaboration in CCIs suggest that the design and implementation phases are two distinct stages that pose different operational challenges for both collaborative partners and project staff. Each phase requires collaborative members and staff to use different skills and expertise, to take on different roles and responsibilities, and to develop different ways of relating to each other. As a result, new tensions are likely to emerge, progress may be stalled, relationships that were working well may fall apart, and new types of technical assistance may be needed to keep the initiative on track.[25]

Several studies discuss specific challenges and tensions that seem inherent to the collaborative process. Issues relating to race, ethnicity, class, status, and power can be particularly divisive and interfere with the partners' ability to develop trust.[26] Differences in education levels, communication styles, and general presentation can make if difficult for collaborative members from different backgrounds to listen to, understand, and respect each other and to feel comfortable within the group. Past experience in place-based initiatives suggests that such tensions are likely to be particularly strong between the professional staff from partner agencies or foundations and the community residents.[27] As noted, the literature on interagency collaboration suggests that differences in institutional cultures can also create similar frictions among the representatives of different government agencies.[28]

Another operational challenge arises from what has been termed the "process-product tension" inherent in CCIs.[29] On the one hand, much of what a collaborative does — both in terms of relationship-building and project implementation — is necessarily a long-term process that unfolds slowly and may take years to produce the desired results. On the other hand, if partners are to maintain interest and commitment over a long period, it is important that they see some tangible results early on. Collaborative initiatives must find a way to balance these two concerns without damaging the quality of either the process or the products. Attempts to circumvent the trust-building process and plow ahead on projects can backfire and create problems in the long term.

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[23]Bardach, 1998; Melaville with Blank, 1991.

[24]Ferguson, 1999.

[25]For a general discussion, see Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997. For an analysis of this phenomenon in specific initiatives, see Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997, Gitell and Newman, 1998.

[26]Ferguson, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995; Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997.

[27]Halpern, 1995; McNeely, 1995; Pitcoff, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995; Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997.

[28]Bardach, 1998; Martinson, 1999; Melaville with Blank, 1991.

[29]Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997.

In general, the literature does not provide a great deal of guidance about how to operationalize the general principles outlined above or much information about the ways that different types of governance structures and decisionmaking procedures and policies might affect the process and outcomes of a collaborative effort in community initiatives. Ferguson notes, for example, that research needs to be done on understanding "how and why particular leadership and organizing strategies work to build trust and interest as well or as poorly as they do under particular conditions."[30] Important exceptions to this generalization are (1) Bardach's study of the "craftsmanship" practices that public agencies and collaborative bodies can adopt to promote collaborative efforts and increase their effectiveness and (2) the emerging body of literature that draws some early lessons about "best practices" for involving residents in decisionmaking and program management in CCIs and HOPE VI sites.[31] Finally, the CCI literature underscores the importance of providing technical assistance to facilitate the relationship-building process as well as to help collaborative bodies with the technical details of project implementation, and a number of studies draw lessons about effective ways to provide technical assistance.[32]

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[30]Ferguson, 1999, p. 595.

[31]Bardach, 1998; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997; Smock, 1999; Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997; Naparstek, Freis, and Kingsley, 2000.

[32]Aspen Institute Roundtable, 1997; Brown, Pitt, and Hirota, 1999; Walker, Watson, and Jucovy, 1999; Chaskin, Dansokho, and Joseph, 1997. These studies suggest that the provision of technical assistance can create tensions among the collaborative partners and between them and the national supporters or funders of an initiative. Tensions arise, for example, over whether the technical assistance effort should be initiated and managed by the national groups or the local collaborative and whether it should be provided by national experts or local experts. Another challenge is ensuring that providers of technical assistance facilitate and develop capacity in local collaborative partners and staff rather than simply doing the necessary work themselves. The Aspen Institute Roundtable notes that facilitating the collaborative process is typically harder than providing technical expertise about how to mount specific projects.

Appendix B

Collaborative Partners and Funding Sources for Jobs-Plus Sites in 1999

The information in this appendix was provided to MDRC by each of the Jobs-Plus programs. A "✓" indicates that the specified agency made an in-kind contribution to Jobs-Plus in the form of on-site staff, services, and/or space.

1. Baltimore: Gilmor Homes

	Contributions	
	Cash ($)	In-Kind
I. Local Funders		
Mandatory Partners		
Housing Authority of Baltimore City	83,333	✓
Baltimore City Department of Social Services	16,667	✓
Department of Labor/JTPA	31,250	
Department of Labor/Welfare-to-Work	371,426	
Gilmor Homes Resident Council		✓
Other Partners		
Foundations		
The Enterprise Foundation	33,333	
Local Agencies		
Civic Works		✓
Department of Public Works		✓
Goodwill Industries/WIC		✓
Office of Employment Development		✓
STRIVE Baltimore (STRIVE)		✓
Village Center/EBMC		✓
Educational Institutions		
Baltimore City Community College		✓
II. National Funders		
Site Payment	100,000	
MDRC Technical Assistance		✓
HUD ED/SS Grant	266,667	
III. Total Year 1999 Budget	902,676	

(continued)

2. Chattanooga: Harriet Tubman Homes		
	Contributions	
	Cash ($)	In-Kind
I. Local Funders		
Mandatory Partners		
Housing Authority		✓
Chattanooga Department of Human Services		✓
Department of Labor/JTPA	63,054	
Department of Labor/Welfare-to-Work		
Resident Management Corporation		✓
Other Partners		
Foundations		
Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga		✓
Lyndhurst Foundation		✓
Local Agencies		
City of Chattanooga	60,000	
The Signal Center		✓
Family and Children Services		✓
Educational Institutions		
Hamilton County Board of Education		✓
Baylor School		✓
II. National Funders		
Site Payment	31,000	
MDRC Technical Assistance		✓
HUD ED/SS Grant	355,586	
III. Total Year 1999 Budget	509,640	

(continued)

3. Dayton: DeSoto Bass Courts		
	Contributions	
	Cash ($)	In-Kind
I. Local Funders		
Mandatory Partners		
Dayton Metro Housing Authority	60,122	✓
Ohio Department of Development	71,000	
Department of Social Services		✓
Department of Labor/JTPA	31,250	
Department of Labor/Welfare-to-Work	31,250	
Resident Council	10,000	
Other Partners		
Foundations		
Dayton Foundation	15,000	
Local Agencies		
Miami Child Development Centers	63,950	
Project Impact for Teen Pregnancy		✓
Regional Transit Authority	4,000	
West Dayton Development Fund	61,000	
SCOPE	10,000	
Educational Institutions		
Sinclair Community College		✓
II. National Funders		
Site Payment	100,000	
MDRC Technical Assistance		✓
HUD ED/SS Grant	166,666	
III. Total Year 1999 Budget	624,238	

(continued)

4. Los Angeles: Imperial Courts and William Mead Homes		
	Contributions	
	Cash ($)	In-Kind
I. Local Funders		
Mandatory Partners		
Housing Authority of the City of L.A.	400,000	✓
L.A. County Department of Social Services		✓
Department of Labor/JTPA	50,000	✓
Department of Labor/Welfare-to-Work		✓
Resident Council		✓
Other Partners		
Foundations		
Community Health Foundation		✓
Local Agencies		
East L.A. Skills Center		✓
F.A.C.E.S		✓
FAME Renaissance Corporation		✓
Head Start		
Kulick Youth Opportunities Program		✓
L.A. County Mental Health Department		✓
L.A. Police Department		
L.A. Unified School District		✓
L.A. Youth At Work		✓
Mothers Reclaiming Our Children (ROC)		✓
II. National Funders		
Site Payment	200,000	
MDRC Technical Assistance		✓
HUD ED/SS Grant	375,000	
III. Total Year 1999 Budget	1,025,000	

(continued)

5. St. Paul: Mt. Airy Homes		
	Contributions	
	Cash ($)	In-Kind
I. Local Funders		
Mandatory Partners		
Housing Authority[a]	409,300	✓
City Department of Social Services		
Department of Labor/JTPA	31,250	
Department of Labor/Welfare-to-Work		
Resident Council		
Other Partners		
Foundations		
Wilder Foundation	50,000	
Edwards Trust	11,000	
Vista		✓
II. National Funders		
Site Payment	16,500	
MDRC Technical Assistance		✓
HUD ED/SS grant	138,725	
III. Total Year 1999 Budget	656,775	

(continued)

NOTE: [a]A one-time payment, covering the cost of financial incentives, accounted for most of the St. Paul Housing Authority's contribution to Jobs-Plus. This payment was eventually recovered from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

6. Seattle: Rainier Vista		
	Contributions	
	Cash ($)	In-Kind
I. Local Funders		
Mandatory Partners		
Housing Authority (Drug Elimination)	72,924	✓
Department of Social Services		✓
Department of Labor/JTPA	15,625	
Department of Labor/Welfare-to-Work	34,135	
Rainer Vista Leadership Team (TOP Grant)	20,000	
Rainer Vista Leadership Team (Match)	9,439	
Other Partners		
Local Agencies		
Child Care Resources	10,413	
Neighbourhood House	29,880	
Refugee Women's Alliance	9,918	✓
II. National Funders		
Site Payment	31,711	
MDRC Technical Assistance		✓
HUD ED/SS Grant	101,800	
III. Total Year 1999 Budget	335,845	

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Recent Publications on MDRC Projects

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Employment and Community Initiatives

Jobs-Plus Initiative

A multi-site effort to greatly increase employment among public housing residents.

A Research Framework for Evaluating Jobs-Plus, a Saturation and Place-Based Employment Initiative for Public Housing Residents. 1998. James Riccio.

Mobilizing Public Housing Communities for Work: Origins and Early Accomplishments of the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 1999. James Riccio.

Building a Convincing Test of a Public Housing Employment Program Using Non-Experimental Methods: Planning for the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 1999. Howard Bloom.

Jobs-Plus Site-by-Site: An Early Look at Program Implementation. 2000. Edited by Susan Philipson Bloom with Susan Blank.

Building New Partnerships for Employment: Collaboration Among Agencies and Public Housing Residents in the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 2001. Linda Kato, James Riccio.

Connections to Work Project

A study of local efforts to increase competition in the choice of providers of employment services for welfare recipients and other low-income populations. The project also provides assistance to cutting-edge local initiatives aimed at helping such people access and secure jobs.

Tulsa's IndEx Program: A Business-Led Initiative for Welfare Reform and Economic Development. 1997. Maria Buck.

Washington Works: Sustaining a Vision of Welfare Reform Based on Personal Change, Work Preparation, and Employer Involvement. 1998. Susan Gooden.

Cost Analysis Step by Step: A How-to Guide for Planners and Providers of Welfare-to-Work and Other Employment and Training Programs. 1998. David Greenberg, Ute Appenzeller.

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San Francisco Works: Toward an Employer-Led Approach to Welfare Reform and Workforce Development. 2000. Steven Bliss.

Section 3 Public Housing Study

An examination of the effectiveness of Section 3 of the 1968 Housing and Urban Development Act in affording employment opportunities for public housing residents.

Lessons from the Field on the Implementation of Section 3 (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). 1996. Maxine Bailey, Suzanne Lynn.

Canada's Earnings Supplement Project

A test of an innovative financial incentive intended to expedite the reemployment of displaced workers and encourage full-year work by seasonal or part-year workers, thereby also reducing receipt of Unemployment Insurance.

Implementing the Earnings Supplement Project: A Test of a Re-employment Incentive (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation). 1997. Howard Bloom, Barbara Fink, Susanna Lui-Gurr, Wendy Bancroft, Doug Tattrie.

Testing a Re-employment Incentive for Displaced Workers: The Earnings Supplement Project. 1999. Howard Bloom, Saul Schwartz, Susanna Lui-Gurr, Suk-Won Lee.

Reforming Welfare and Making Work Pay

Next Generation Project

A collaboration among researchers at MDRC and several leading research institutions focused on studying the effects of welfare, antipoverty, and employment policies on children and families.

How Welfare and Work Policies Affect Children: A Synthesis of Research. 2001. Pamela Morris, Aletha Huston, Greg Duncan, Danielle Crosby, Johannes Bos.

How Welfare and Work Policies Affect Employment and Income: A Synthesis of Research. 2001. Dan Bloom, Charles Michalopoulos.

ReWORKing Welfare: Technical Assistance for States and Localities

A multifaceted effort to assist states and localities in designing and implementing their welfare reform programs. The project includes a series of "how-to" guides, conferences, briefings, and customized, in-depth technical assistance.

After AFDC: Welfare-to-Work Choices and Challenges for States. 1997. Dan Bloom.

Changing to a Work First Strategy: Lessons from Los Angeles County's GAIN Program for Welfare Recipients. 1997. Evan Weissman.

Work First: How to Implement an Employment-Focused Approach to Welfare Reform. 1997. Amy Brown.

Business Partnerships: How to Involve Employers in Welfare Reform. 1998. Amy Brown, Maria Buck, Erik Skinner.

Learnfare: How to Implement a Mandatory Stay-in-School Program for Teenage Parents on Welfare. 1998. David Long, Johannes Bos.

Promoting Participation: How to Increase Involvement in Welfare-to-Work Activities. 1999. Gayle Hamilton, Susan Scrivener.

Encouraging Work, Reducing Poverty: The Impact of Work Incentive Programs. 2000. Gordon Berlin.

Steady Work and Better Jobs: How to Help Low-Income Parents Sustain Employment and Advance in the Workforce. 2000. Julie Strawn, Karin Martinson.

Beyond Work First: How to Help Hard-to-Employ Individuals Get Jobs and Succeed in the Workforce. 2001. Amy Brown.

Project on Devolution and Urban Change

A multi-year study in four major urban counties — Cuyahoga County, Ohio (which includes the city of Cleveland), Los Angeles, Miami-Dade, and Philadelphia — that examines how welfare reforms are being implemented and affect poor people, their neighborhoods, and the institutions that serve them.

Big Cities and Welfare Reform: Early Implementation and Ethnographic Findings from the Project on Devolution and Urban Change. 1999. Janet Quint, Kathryn Edin, Maria Buck, Barbara Fink, Yolanda Padilla, Olis Simmons-Hewitt, Mary Valmont.

Food Security and Hunger in Poor, Mother-Headed Families in Four U.S. Cities. 2000. Denise Polit, Andrew London, John Martinez.

Assessing the Impact of Welfare Reform on Urban Communities: The Urban Change Project and Methodological Considerations. Forthcoming. Charles Michalopoulos, Johannes Bos, Robert Lalonde, Nandita Verma.

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Social Service Organizations and Welfare Reform. 2001. Barbara Fink, Rebecca Widom.

Time Limits

Florida's Family Transition Program

An evaluation of Florida's initial time-limited welfare program, which includes services, requirements, and financial work incentives intended to reduce long-term welfare receipt and help welfare recipients find and keep jobs.

The Family Transition Program: An Early Implementation Report on Florida's Time-Limited Welfare Initiative. 1995. Dan Bloom.

The Family Transition Program: Implementation and Early Impacts of Florida's Initial Time-Limited Welfare Program. 1997. Dan Bloom, James Kemple, Robin Rogers-Dillon.

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The Family Transition Program: Implementation and Three-Year Impacts of Florida's Initial Time-Limited Welfare Program. 1999. Dan Bloom, Mary Farrell, James Kemple, Nandita Verma.

The Family Transition Program: Final Report on Florida's Initial Time-Limited Welfare Program. 2000. Dan Bloom, James Kemple, Pamela Morris, Susan Scrivener, Nandita Verma, Richard Hendra.

Cross-State Study of Time-Limited Welfare

An examination of the implementation of some of the first state-initiated time-limited welfare programs.

Implementing Time-Limited Welfare: Early Experiences in Three States. 1995. Dan Bloom, David Butler.

The View from the Field: As Time Limits Approach, Welfare Recipients and Staff Talk About Their Attitudes and Expectations. 1997. Amy Brown, Dan Bloom, David Butler.

Welfare Time Limits: An Interim Report Card. 1999. Dan Bloom.

Connecticut's Jobs First Program

An evaluation of Connecticut's statewide time-limited welfare program, which includes financial work incentives and requirements to participate in employment-related services aimed at rapid job placement. This study provides some of the earliest information on the effects of time limits in major urban areas.

Early Data on the Implementation of Connecticut's Jobs First Program. 1997. Dan Bloom, Mary Andes.

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Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project

An evaluation of Vermont's statewide welfare reform program, which includes a work requirement after a certain period of welfare receipt, and financial work incentives.

WRP: Implementation and Early Impacts of Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project. 1998. Dan Bloom, Charles Michalopoulos, Johanna Walter, Patricia Auspos.

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Financial Incentives

Encouraging Work, Reducing Poverty: The Impact of Work Incentive Programs. 2000. Gordon Berlin.

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New Hope Project

A test of a community-based, work-focused antipoverty program and welfare alternative operating in Milwaukee.

The New Hope Offer: Participants in the New Hope Demonstration Discuss Work, Family, and Self-Sufficiency. 1996. Dudley Benoit.

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New Hope for People with Low Incomes: Two-Year Results of a Program to Reduce Poverty and Reform Welfare. 1999. Johannes Bos, Aletha Huston, Robert Granger, Greg Duncan, Thomas Brock, Vonnie McLoyd.

Canada's Self-Sufficiency Project

A test of the effectiveness of a temporary earnings supplement on the employment and welfare receipt of public assistance recipients. Reports on the Self-Sufficiency Project are available from: Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), 275 Slater St., Suite 900, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H9, Canada. Tel.: 613-237-4311; Fax: 613-237-5045. In the United States, the reports are also available from MDRC.

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The Self-Sufficiency Project at 36 Months: Effects on Children of a Program That Increased Parental Employment and Income (SRDC). 2000. Pamela Morris, Charles Michalopoulos.

Mandatory Welfare Employment Programs

National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies

Conceived and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with support from the U.S. Department of Education, this is the largest-scale evaluation ever conducted of different strategies for moving people from welfare to employment.

Adult Education for People on AFDC: A Synthesis of Research (U.S. Department of Education [ED]/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS]). 1995. Edward Pauly.

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Do Mandatory Welfare-to-Work Programs Affect the Well-Being of Children? A Synthesis of Child Research Conducted as Part of the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies (HHS/ED). 2000. Gayle Hamilton.

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Impacts on Young Children and Their Families Two Years After Enrollment: Findings from the Child Outcomes Study (HHS/ED). 2000. Sharon McGroder, Martha Zaslow, Kristin Moore, Suzanne LeMenestrel.

What Works Best for Whom: Impacts of 20 Welfare-to-Work Programs by Subgroup (HHS/ED). 2000. Charles Michalopoulos, Christine Schwartz.

Los Angeles's Jobs-First GAIN Program

An evaluation of Los Angeles's refocused GAIN (welfare-to-work) program, which emphasizes rapid employment. This is the first in-depth study of a full-scale "work first" program in one of the nation's largest urban areas.

Changing to a Work First Strategy: Lessons from Los Angeles County's GAIN Program for Welfare Recipients. 1997. Evan Weissman.

The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN Evaluation: Preliminary Findings on Participation Patterns and First-Year Impacts. 1998. Stephen Freedman, Marisa Mitchell, David Navarro.

The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN Evaluation: First-Year Findings on Participation Patterns and Impacts. 1999. Stephen Freedman, Marisa Mitchell, David Navarro.

The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN Evaluation: Final Report on a Work First Program in a Major Urban Center. 2000. Stephen Freedman, Jean Knab, Lisa Gennetian, David Navarro.

Teen Parents on Welfare

Teenage Parent Programs: A Synthesis of the Long-Term Effects of the New Chance Demonstration, Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program, and the Teenage Parent Demonstration (TPD). 1998. Robert Granger, Rachel Cytron.

Ohio's LEAP Program

An evaluation of Ohio's Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) Program, which uses

financial incentives to encourage teenage parents on welfare to stay in or return to school.

LEAP: Final Report on Ohio's Welfare Initiative to Improve School Attendance Among Teenage Parents. 1997. Johannes Bos, Veronica Fellerath.

New Chance Demonstration

A test of a comprehensive program of services that seeks to improve the economic status and general well-being of a group of highly disadvantaged young women and their children.

New Chance: Final Report on a Comprehensive Program for Young Mothers in Poverty and Their Children. 1997. Janet Quint, Johannes Bos, Denise Polit.

Parenting Behavior in a Sample of Young Mothers in Poverty: Results of the New Chance Observational Study. 1998. Martha Zaslow, Carolyn Eldred, editors.

Focusing on Fathers

Parents' Fair Share Demonstration

A demonstration for unemployed noncustodial parents (usually fathers) of children on welfare. PFS aims to improve the men's employment and earnings, reduce child poverty by increasing child support payments, and assist the fathers in playing a broader constructive role in their children's lives.

Low-Income Parents and the Parents' Fair Share Demonstration. 1996. Earl Johnson, Fred Doolittle.

Working with Low-Income Cases: Lessons for the Child Support Enforcement System from Parents' Fair Share. 1998. Fred Doolittle, Suzanne Lynn.

Building Opportunities, Enforcing Obligations: Implementation and Interim Impacts of Parents' Fair Share. 1998. Fred Doolittle, Virginia Knox, Cynthia Miller, Sharon Rowser.

Fathers' Fair Share: Helping Poor Men Manage Child Support and Fatherhood (Russell Sage Foundation). 1999. Earl Johnson, Ann Levine, Fred Doolittle.

Parenting and Providing: The Impact of Parents' Fair Share on Paternal Involvement. 2000. Virginia Knox, Cindy Redcross.

Working and Earning: The Impact of Parents' Fair Share on Low-Income Fathers' Employment. 2000. John M. Martinez, Cynthia Miller.

The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum. 2000. Eileen Hayes, with Kay Sherwood.

Other

Can They All Work? A Study of the Employment Potential of Welfare Recipients in a Welfare-to-Work Program. 1995. James Riccio, Stephen Freedman.

Florida's Project Independence: Benefits, Costs, and Two-Year Impacts of Florida's JOBS Program. 1995. James Kemple, Daniel Friedlander, Veronica Fellerath.

From Welfare to Work Among Lone Parents in Britain: Lessons for America. 1996. James Riccio.

Education Reform

Career Academies

The largest and most comprehensive evaluation of a school-to-work initiative, this study examines a promising approach to high school restructuring and the school-to-work transition.

Career Academies: Early Implementation Lessons from a 10-Site Evaluation. 1996. James Kemple, JoAnn Leah Rock.

Career Academies: Communities of Support for Students and Teachers — Emerging Findings from a 10-Site Evaluation. 1997. James Kemple.

Career Academies: Building Career Awareness and Work-Based Learning Activities Through Employer Partnerships. 1999. James Kemple, Susan Poglinco, Jason Snipes.

Career Academies: Impacts on Students' Engagement and Performance in High School. 2000. James Kemple, Jason Snipes.

Project GRAD

This evaluation examines Project GRAD, an education initiative targeted at urban schools and combining a number of proven or promising reforms.

Building the Foundation for Improved Student Performance: The Pre-Curricular Phase of Project GRAD Newark. 2000. Sandra Ham, Fred C. Doolittle, Glee Ivory Holton.

LILAA Initiative
This study of the Literacy in Libraries Across America (LILAA) initiative explores the efforts of five adult literacy programs in public libraries to improve learner persistence.

So I Made Up My Mind: Introducing a Study of Adult Learner Persistence in Library Literacy Programs. 2000. John T. Comings, Sondra Cuban.

Project Transition
A demonstration program that tested a combination of school-based strategies to facilitate students' transition from middle school to high school.

Project Transition: Testing an Intervention to Help High School Freshmen Succeed. 1999. Janet Quint, Cynthia Miller, Jennifer Pastor, Rachel Cytron.

Equity 2000
Equity 2000 is a nationwide initiative sponsored by the College Board to improve low-income students' access to college. The MDRC paper examines the implementation of Equity 2000 in Milwaukee Public Schools.

Getting to the Right Algebra: The Equity 2000 Initiative in Milwaukee Public Schools. 1999. Sandra Ham, Erica Walker.

School-to-Work Project
A study of innovative programs that help students make the transition from school to work or careers.

Home-Grown Lessons: Innovative Programs Linking School and Work (Jossey-Bass Publishers). 1995. Edward Pauly, Hilary Kopp, Joshua Haimson.

Home-Grown Progress: The Evolution of Innovative School-to-Work Programs. 1997. Rachel Pedraza, Edward Pauly, Hilary Kopp.

MDRC Working Papers on Research Methodology

A new series of papers that explore alternative methods of examining the implementation and impacts of programs and policies.

Building a Convincing Test of a Public Housing Employment Program Using Non-Experimental Methods: Planning for the Jobs-Plus Demonstration. 1999. Howard Bloom.

Estimating Program Impacts on Student Achievement Using "Short" Interrupted Time Series. 1999. Howard Bloom.

Using Cluster Random Assignment to Measure Program Impacts: Statistical Implications for the Evaluation of Education Programs. 1999. Howard Bloom, Johannes Bos, Suk-Won Lee.

Measuring the Impacts of Whole School Reforms: Methodological Lessons from an Evaluation of Accelerated Schools. 2001. Howard Bloom.

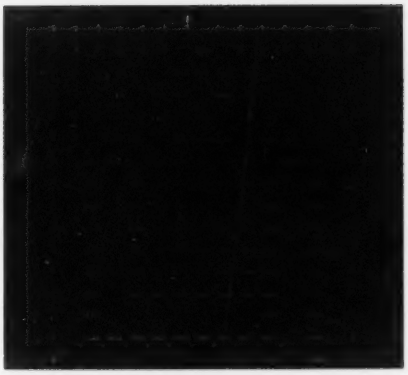
About MDRC

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social policy research organization. We are dedicated to learning what works to improve the well-being of low-income people. Through our research and the active communication of our findings, we seek to enhance the effectiveness of social policies and programs. MDRC was founded in 1974 and is located in New York City and San Francisco.

MDRC's current projects focus on welfare and economic security, education, and employment and community initiatives. Complementing our evaluations of a wide range of welfare reforms are new studies of supports for the working poor and emerging analyses of how programs affect children's development and their families' well-being. In the field of education, we are testing reforms aimed at improving the performance of public schools, especially in urban areas. Finally, our community projects are using innovative approaches to increase employment in low-income neighborhoods.

Our projects are a mix of demonstrations — field tests of promising program models — and evaluations of government and community initiatives, and we employ a wide range of methods such as large-scale studies to determine a program's effects, surveys, case studies, and ethnographies of individuals and families. We share the findings and lessons from our work — including best practices for program operators — with a broad audience within the policy and practitioner community, as well as the general public and the media.

Over the past quarter century, MDRC has worked in almost every state, all of the nation's largest cities, and Canada. We conduct our projects in partnership with state and local governments, the federal government, public school systems, community organizations, and numerous private philanthropies.



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